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ABSTRACT

In October and November of 1990, Ministers of Education from Commonwealth nations attended a conference in Barbados. The theme of the conference was improving the quality of basic education. Before the conference, the Commonwealth Secretariat prepared an issues paper that served as a background document for the conference. The issues paper comprises the first part of this publication. Issues discussed include: (1) quality in education; (2) the problem of defining and measuring quality in basic education; (3) educational policies relating to teacher training, curriculum, student assessment, and the organization of educational systems; and (4) school improvement. After the conference, papers submitted by 48 of the participating countries were summarized in an overview document. This document, which comprises the second part of this publication, discusses national experiences in improving educational quality, and international cooperative efforts. The national experiences concern: (1) the structure and organization of educational systems; (2) curriculum, learning materials, and assessment; (3) pre-service teacher education, in- service teacher training and teacher support; (4) efficiency and decentralization of management, and the process of improving administrative supervision; (5) the role of education in communities; and (6) issues of finances and resources. (BC)

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Improving the Quality of Basic Education

(1) The Issues

(2) A Survey of Commonwealth Experience

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Improving the Quality of Basic Education

(1) The Issues

(2) A Survey of Commonwealth Experience

Education Programme
Commonwealth Secretariat

COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

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PREFACE

Commonwealth Ministers of Education gather every three years to exchange views on matters of common concern and to devise programmes of practical Commonwealth co-operation in education. The series of conferences began at Oxford in 1959, and the eleventh was held in Barbados from October 29 to November 2 1990 at the invitation of the Government of that country. It was attended by delegations from 40 countries and a total of 40 ministers, as well as by about 200 other delegates and conference staff.

At each of these conferences a topical theme is chosen as the principal focus of discussion in plenary session and in ministerial committee. In 1990, ministers chose 'improving the quality of basic education' as their keynote theme, reflecting the widespread concern throughout the Commonwealth, in industrialised as well as in less developed countries, with the quality of the experience that young people have in primary and secondary schools and with their attainment levels on completing these stages of formal education. Earlier, in March 1990, Commonwealth countries were among those represented at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand, when a World Declaration on education was issued. This called both for the universalisation of access to education by the year 2000, and also for attainment of the very much more challenging target of 'improvement in learning achievement such that an agreed percentage of an appropriate age cohort (e.g. 80 per cent of 14 year-olds) attains or surpasses a defined level of necessary learning achievement'.

The communique issued by Commonwealth ministers following their Barbados meeting, and the report of the conference published in May 1991 show ministers had a fruitful exchange of views in which they were also able to chart the way forward both for their national programmes to improve quality in schools, as well as for future international co-operation.

The Commonwealth Secretariat customarily engages in intensive preparatory work before ministerial discussions to ensure that ministers and delegates have at their disposal an up-to-date picture of achievements and problems in the Commonwealth, and a background analysis of some of the key issues which arise in meeting education development challenges in the area chosen for discussion. To this end, the Secretariat invites member countries to submit a paper about national experiences and these papers are then summarised through an overview document which selects highlights from the material treated at greater length in individual country papers. (These papers are available on application to the Secretariat.) In 1990 Dr David Stephens of the University of Sussex assisted the Secretariat in this task and the fruit of his labours appears, after appropriate editorial input by the Secretariat, as the second paper in this volume. The first paper is the Secretariat's own issues paper which served as a background document for the conference. This was written in-house but benefited greatly from discussion at a pan-Commonwealth seminar in October 1989, from specially commissioned papers from specialists throughout the Commonwealth, and from the wealth of documentation stemming from the Jomtien initiative and appearing in the months preceding the Barbados Conference.

This present volume should, then, be read in conjunction with the report of the Barbados Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers, appearing simultaneously. Together they represent a contribution from the Commonwealth and its Secretariat to one of the major debates of our time -- on how to enhance and release human capacities for development of a better world by improving the quality of education imparted at the basic level.

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(1) THE ISSUES

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A. THE CONCERN WITH QUALITY

1 The quality of education is back on everybody's agenda. At international level attention has been focussed in global fora, most notably at the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) in Jomtien in March 1990, on improving learning. Other international conferences including 11th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers and that of the education ministers of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) a fortnight later, have selected the quality of education as their focus of discussion. Several new publications addressing this theme in an international perspective have recently appeared*. At national level, both within the Commonwealth and beyond, improving the quality of education is assuming a higher place in public priorities. School reform, education standards, teacher morale, levels of reading ability, cost-effective management in education have become the currency of much political debate. At grassroots level, parents eye their children's schools more critically than ever before.

2 From some points of view this sense of concern, and even alarm, over the quality of education is a puzzle. For in most countries more and more children and young people are attaining minimum grades to continue into secondary or higher education; and teachers appear to be better educated than at any time previously. Curricula have been revised to bring them more closely into line with modern needs. In terms of finance more is being spent on education than ever before.

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*For example:
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1989) Schools and quality: an international report. Paris, OECD.

Lockheed, Marlaine and Verspoor, Adriaan (1990) Improving primary education in developing countries: a review of policy options. Washington. The World Bank.

Ross, Kenneth and Mahlck, Lars, Editors, (1990) Planning the quality of education: the collection and use of data for informed decision-making. Paris, IIEP/Unesco with Pergamon Press.

Hawes, Hugh and Stephens, David (1990) Questions of quality: primary education and development. London, Longman.

3 Shouldn't all this mean better education? Is this concern over quality based on perceptions or realities? Is there some folk memory of times past when schools taught the 3 Rs to a high standard, when shoddy work was not tolerated, when students were immediately disciplined for bad behaviour, when children could spell correctly and learned important facts, and when teachers set an example in good conduct to the whole community? Are these memories an accurate recollection of the past; or are they a figment of the imagination with the tendency to forget the boredom, narrowness and harshness of schooling in the past, the blinkered nature of what was taught, and the limited competence of some of yesterday's teachers?

4 There are no simple or uniform answers to these questions. In a Commonwealth of 50 countries one must expect to find conflicting evidence, with wide variations between national systems and within them. One finds many school buildings and furniture in a poor state of repair, and inadequate provision of books and materials. Schooling is sometimes suspended for lack of money to pay teachers or to buy school supplies. In some Commonwealth countries primary school enrolment rates have recently fallen.

5 Only qualified answers can be given therefore to the question whether by any objective reckoning education has become better or worse. The present disenchantment with the performance of public schooling may be better understood in relative rather than absolute terms.

(a) Education tends to receive a smaller proportion than before of gross national product and of the government budget, and has a lower place among spending priorities. Within the education budget the share of primary schooling is squeezed because of the relentless pressure to expand more expensive upper levels of education.

(b) In some of the poorest Commonwealth countries GNP per capita has fallen in real terms. In the face of rising demands for education, this means that there are fewer resources per student now than a decade or so ago.

(c) A smaller proportion than in the past of the highest academic achievers of secondary and higher education is entering teacher training so that, relative to the top 20% of the population, teachers appear to be a less able segment of the population than formerly.

(d) By comparison with other occupations the status of teaching, and teachers' salaries, have generally fallen. Teachers were once the most educated persons in a locality, but nowadays many parents are themselves as well educated as their children's teachers and thus tend to be more critical of schools than were their own unschooled parents.

(e) Access to primary schooling in developing countries has been extended to virtually the whole age group. It is unrealistic to expect today's fully comprehensive intake, encompassing many kinds of disadvantaged children, to obtain as good pass rates on a standard academic examination as did yesterday's carefully selected one.

(f) In many countries levels of educational attainment that twenty years ago would assure the certificate holder paid employment no longer suffice to get a job.

6 Whatever the truth about the past however, the incentive to improve quality in future is strong. Leaders worry about national competitiveness and their country's ability to keep abreast of scientific and technological advance. The education system represents a major public investment, and the issue of obtaining value for money inevitably engages the attention of policy makers in government. Parents understand that the quality of schools conditions the quality of life of their children now, and is also the key to their future life chances.

7 Moreover, the new preoccupation worldwide with quality of education is a logical next step after so much progress in terms of quantity. Most Commonwealth countries now recruit 85% or more of the primary school age children into schools and this has been achieved at a time of rapid population growth and with comparatively fragile economies. The challenge thus posed at WCEFA in March 1990 was to push not just for universal access to education - a gargantuan task in itself - but simultaneously for universal learning achievement so as to give real meaning to education for all.

8 These twin Jomtien goals of quantity and quality will sometimes be in conflict, as for example when choices have to be made between increasing the size of the system and improving what's already there; spending money on either, say, additional teachers or on extra in-service programmes for those already serving. Yet quantity and quality are also complementary dimensions of education provision and mutually interact:

(a) The quality of an education system is partly defined by its accessibility to the highest possible number and widest range of learners, encompassing both sexes and the whole spectrum of ability levels and ages.

(b) Assessment of quality must frequently rely on quantitative measures.

(c) Better quality schools and courses stimulate demand for education, increasing initial registration and reducing repetition, failure and early leaving.

(d) Some worthwhile educational services like radio, teachers centres, or local textbook publishing depend for their viability on the size of the market and economies of scale.

(e) As basic education expands, the point of selection to secondary and upper secondary education can be deferred, reducing the intense competitive pressure exerted on primary school teaching by selection exams.

B. DEFINING AND MEASURING QUALITY IN BASIC EDUCATION

9 Both 'basic education' and 'quality' mean different things to different people. Some clarification of terms is desirable.

Basic Education

10 In the context of this paper 'basic education' refers to that level of education in any country that constitutes the foundation stage offered to all, or virtually all, children. Usually but not always this stage is unselective and undifferentiated by curriculum programme. It would include at least primary schooling: in many Commonwealth countries it would comprise lower secondary schooling too, while in a few as many as five or six years of universal secondary schooling are provided, up to the secondary school certificate level. Programmes of out-of-school education, for children and adults, of the same level as primary and junior secondary school programmes would also be classified as basic education. This paper concentrates mainly on formal schooling but Section E addresses quality issues for basic education out of school.

Quality

11 The notion of quality of education is more problematic. There is no single definition of quality, and there are several ways of interpreting 'quality' in education.

Intrinsic versus instrumental nature of education

12 Many people would identify education as good if it is broad in subject content and goals (knowledge, skills, behaviour, values, aesthetic appreciation etc) helping learners to become rounded human beings; and if it also 'stretches' and challenges them, drawing out and developing their full potential. In this case the quality of a school or an education programme is defined in terms of the intrinsic nature and purpose of education to enlarge human capacities.

13 This view of educational quality can be contrasted with one that defines it in instrumental terms of usefulness both to the learner's future life and to the needs of society. Does education prepare children and adults to live successfully in their own society, to obtain work and earn a livelihood? Does it make people better farmers, shopkeepers, entrepreneurs? Does it produce the pool of specialist technical skills that the country

may need for industrialisation or modernising the economy? Education is often criticised for being too remote from such real concerns.

14 Although these two views of education quality, the intrinsic and the instrumental, are sometimes contrasted, it is not clear they are necessarily opposed. Many believe that concentration on enlarging human capacities to learn and adapt is actually more useful in a changing society than to teach specialised subject matter or to train people in specific skills.

Education: an experience or a preparation?

15 The quality of school life, the nature of relationships between teachers and learners, among teachers, and among learners are important in themselves as well as being means for producing useful outcomes. Those in full-time primary education may spend about a third of their waking hours over the year in classrooms and schools; their experiences in school are central to the quality of their present life, not simply a preparation for life after school.

Education achievement: level reached or progress made?

16 The quality of schools is often assessed in terms of the level of achievement that their pupils exhibit on examinations. But the same score obtained by Pupil A and Pupil B may represent very different amounts of progress at school because their starting points may have been quite different. In judging overall performance, distance travelled may be as significant as point reached. Thus the quality of entering students is highly relevant when assessing success of a school or course. In terms of progress made there is a sense in which a good special school for disadvantaged children may be of at least as high a quality as a top grammar school. Moreover the progress of all children in a school is relevant, not just that of a selected number of high fliers who sit a particular examination. The question is: what is the overall product of a school or system in terms of how many of the students are brought how far? Assessment of this kind can help to put into better perspective the problem of some schools concentrating resources on getting good exam grades for a minority of well-publicised high fliers, while paying scant attention to the learning capabilities of the majority.

Educational attainment: cognitive only, or multi-dimensional?

17 The surest measure of the quality of education is whether pupils are learning effectively, improving their knowledge, skills and abilities, widening their experience and growing socially and morally. It is the acquisition and internalisation of new traits and the development of desired human capacities over a wide range that is the test of educational effectiveness. For most parents cognitive learning achievements, as expressed through test results, are the key indicator of quality. But this may be partly a reflection of the use of tests in selecting people for further education and jobs. Parents also attach importance to moral, social and spiritual aspects of education,

attributes that are less readily recognised or demonstrated in a two-hour time span in an examination hall. Yet employers, teachers and parents would acknowledge that initiative, ability to work with others, readiness to accept responsibility and to work for the public good, are highly prized characteristics.

Quality of education: universal or situation-specific

18 The quality of education in each society should ideally be assessed in terms of the values and goals, difficult as they are to articulate clearly, of that country's social system and culture, and in terms of the policies, objectives and practices of its education system. In assessing language competence of pupils for example, comparative studies have to take careful account of different language situations in some societies and of the range of languages used by the same person in different situations. The unique character of each system and society does not rule out the validity of international comparisons of achievement in, say, mathematical skills but it does suggest caution in generalising from the results of comparative surveys.

Quality and equality

19 Learners vary in age, aptitude and ability, in language and cultural background and in other characteristics. An education system which takes no account of these differences in framing its curriculum is inadequate. It runs the risk of categorising those who do not possess the traits of the majority as failures. Good education recognises, and adapts to, the starting point of the learners and the capacities they bring to their learning. A related point concerns equality versus excellence. Some people believe that 'more means worse' and for the reasons alluded to in para 5e, there is likely to be a sense in which the average student performance may drop on a standard range of tests when education is extended to the whole population. Against this more students may obtain the highest grades, and what is sometimes called the 'achievement yield' (how many achieve how much) may well have risen. Beyond this, participation is to be prized in and for itself, and the ability of a system to unlock the potential and abilities of the widest possible spectrum of learners in the society is surely one dimension of its quality.

Value for money

20 In the real world a policy maker cannot disregard cost when pursuing quality. Education provision must be appropriate in terms of what society can afford. 'Value for money' is as valid a concept in education as elsewhere. Many schools and teachers though poorly supported in material terms, do an outstanding job in difficult circumstances with the few resources they are given, and are sometimes more cost-effective than lavishly endowed institutions.

Measuring Quality: Education Indicators

21 The discussion in paragraphs 11-20 confirms that definitions of quality in education are themselves somewhat elusive and slippery; and in any discussion of it, terms need to be carefully defined. It is clear, that quality is a relative idea, not something which is absolute. Policy makers and planners wishing to improve education need to operationalise the idea of quality. One useful first step is to select or design a range of educational 'indicators', as explicit and measurable representations of quality in education. The purpose of indicators is, like the doctor taking a patient's temperature, to assist in the diagnosis of the quality of education and to assess changes for better or worse over time. As evidence of quality they need to be supplemented by other evidence from inspectors, teachers, parents and students.

22 If indicators are to be used more extensively, developing countries require better educational statistics and monitoring systems. Regular, accurate and standardised reporting is the indispensable basis for devising and using indicators of quality improvement.

23 It is important that the indicators of quality are valid representations of the values they stand for. Otherwise perverse results are obtained. Some widely used indicators of the efficiency of education systems such as drop out and input-output ratios run into this danger. 'Drop-out' is 'school leaving' under another name, something that every learner - except the so-called perpetual students! - must do at some time. Early leaving may be a response to educational conditions, such as boring and irrelevant courses, which label large numbers of learners as failures and dunces, or to social conditions of family poverty. To call a person who leaves after five years of a six-year cycle 'a drop-out', as a species quite distinct from the person who leaves after six years, promotes the spurious notion that nothing is learned until a certificate is gained, because the only recognised output is successful completion of the education cycle by passing the final examination. It leads to the ludicrous conclusion that the system is more efficient when, in a six-year cycle, non-completers drop out after only one or two years of school than if they leave after the fifth year. This stands common sense on its head.

24 When indicators are used not simply as guides to quality but as tools for operational purposes, one must avoid choosing indicators that may be manipulable by schools and teachers. If pass-rates among candidates on public examinations are used to reward teachers and for resource allocation, schools may be tempted to allow only the most promising candidates to sit the exam. If 'range of curriculum subjects offered' is rewarded, then the school return form will list large numbers of options available irrespective of how many pupils actually study each one or of the price being paid in terms of larger teaching groups in basic subjects.

Education Inputs, Processes and Outcomes

25 Education systems are sometimes likened to economic production with inputs being transformed through manufacturing processes into outputs of finished goods; and indicators of the quality of education are often classified under these three headings. Whereas in industrial production the judgement of quality is basically in terms of the finished product, in education the inputs are sometimes the most visible part of the production chain and outputs the least. Moreover as discussed in para 15 the processes themselves may be considered as in a sense part of the product and thus of value in themselves.

26 The inputs in education are such obvious factors as school buildings, teachers, and materials. It may not be too difficult to devise some indicators of quality in connection with each of these. One should not however overlook that what is perhaps the most important input of all to the learning situation is the learner. Unfortunately learners often embark on education ill-prepared for it, increasing the probability of under-achievement in relation to basic abilities. WCEFA in Jomtien laid great stress on learning readiness, on proper nutritional and health care for very young children and on early childhood education. Remedial action needed includes ante-natal and post-natal care and advice for mothers on health and nutrition; advice and help to mothers on giving their young children appropriate encouragement and stimulation; material support where proper care of children is beyond families' financial capacity; pre-school education, as valuable in itself and to help the child to approach primary schooling with greater confidence; health screening and nutrition programmes at primary school.

27 Education processes refer to the interactions in the school and classroom between the pupil and the learning environment: above all this means interaction with the teacher, but also with other pupils and with learning materials; and it includes the various experiences provided by the curriculum. It may be possible to define a few objective measures of education processes which could stand as indicators of quality - for example proportion of classroom time spent in actual learning tasks, or time spent by each pupil in a situation of one-to-one contact with the teacher. But many of the judgements of the quality of process would have to be arrived at through other means, like the assessments of education advisors and inspectors.

28 The outputs or outcomes of education are normally defined in terms of measures of attainment of the learners, and of the changed behaviours of educated and schooled people compared with those who are unschooled but comparable in other respects. These behaviours might be specified for example in terms of earning capacity, employability, or involvement in community activities. It is not impossible to find measures of some of these attributes, but it is less easy to be sure whether and to what extent education is the causative factor in any differences observed among the schooled, and between them and the unschooled.

29 Education administrators trying to improve quality have to use some sort of working hypothesis connecting inputs and actions with desired outcomes, showing how investments in inputs - e.g. radio broadcasts, school inspections, a new curriculum, better trained teachers - result in better education processes and in the improved final output in terms of more learning achievement and more desirable social behaviour. Ideally they would like to know the "education production functions" which link education inputs to processes and outputs. Unfortunately such relationships have proved difficult to establish even in one country let alone on a comparative basis. So many different factors combine to produce good education and not all of them are subject to the influence of education policy makers. Education researchers have identified many intervening variables originating with the home and society which heavily influence pupil learning. In a particular situation good grades may owe as much to parental support and good health as to size of class and supply of textbooks.

30 The fact that research cannot specify with scientific precision what increases in education inputs or changes in educational processes have most impact on desired outcomes need not, and clearly does not, paralyse action. It is not necessary to understand the precise statistical relationship involved, to see that where a school has no textbooks and teacher absenteeism is a problem, the provision of primers and steps to ensure regularity of teacher attendance are likely to be very beneficial.

31 In the last two or three years there has been a succession of important studies on education development emanating from the international organisations, the World Bank, Unicef, Unesco/IIEP, UNDP: the four agencies which joined together as sponsors of the World Conference on Education for All. Many reports of national education commissions, and government policy statements have also appeared. A wide consensus is noticeable about the determinants of quality improvement with emphasis on the role of teacher motivation and teacher effectiveness; on instructional materials; and on increased time for learning. Measures concerning examination systems, curriculum reform, nutrition and health impacts on students, better management all find frequent mention. From some quarters more controversial suggestions are made, such as the reference by Lockheed and Verspoor to adjustments of the 'intended curriculum' (as distinct from the 'implemented curriculum'), computers in the classroom, class-size reductions below 40 to 50 students, lengthy pre-service pedagogical training,. and provision of school lunches, as 'blind alleys' in the search for serious ways to improve the quality of basic education.

32 Many commentators also emphasise the importance of the school and the school environment for education reform. The next sections of this paper will accordingly discuss practical action for qualitative reform first under system-wide elements and then under the school.

C. SYSTEM-WIDE POLICIES AND PROVISION

33 The essential direction and unity of the education system is provided by central professional and managerial services which establish the goals and policies, devise systems for supplying and distributing resources, train teachers, design curricula and provide supervision and support. These constitute the essential framework which guides and underpins the work of schools, teachers and classrooms where education takes place.

Teachers and Their Training

34 The quantity, quality, motivation and skill of teachers largely determine how good education will be. In many countries there is a sense that those attracted to teaching today are less highly selected and less committed than in the past, even though examples of outstanding skill and dedication abound. The contemporary teacher has an increasingly complex task to perform as more content and skills are loaded on to an already full curriculum. Teachers require more professionalism than ever.

Selection

35 Many countries have upgraded the formal qualifications of teachers and in attracting new recruits have sought to obtain better geographical balance and, where the proportion is unduly low, to attract additional women teachers which can assist girls' enrolment. Personal qualities tend to receive too little emphasis when candidates are being selected for teacher training. Schemes of service which provide for some teacher trainees to be selected from those with service in the schools as unqualified teachers can provide more evidence of whether candidates are cut out for teaching before an expensive training is provided. The recent OECD study (see p.1) suggests that "successful teaching is primarily due to personality characteristics such as patience, persistence, the ability to analyse problems and empathy with students. Yet very few training institutions or colleges seriously attempt to select future teachers according to personality in any way that could be described as scientific, or even systematic ... Experiments have been tried of arranging preliminary interviews in a school setting, and of observing the applicant in contact with children, with a view to obtaining better predictive results" (OECD, 1990 p73.

Initial training

36 It has recently been suggested, by the World Bank among others, that initial college-based teacher education could be very much shortened, especially if recruits entered with a better level of general education. Paradoxically, more is being expected of teachers than ever before and there are those who would like to squeeze more content and skills into their training period. The wisdom of shortening courses will of course depend to a large extent on comparative costs and efficacy of

alternative patterns of teacher preparation such as school-based training; and on whether initial training is once-for-all or whether it is part of a sequenced professional development including induction and in-service education at later stages. The potential role of pre-service education in building up an 'esprit de corps' and commitment to the profession among teachers as they embark on their professional life should not be underestimated. A further argument against shortening initial training is the effect this might have on the professional status and pay of teachers in those countries where these are closely linked to length of training.

37 As the following country papers make clear, Commonwealth experience includes a variety of patterns and mixes of college-based and in-service training of teachers at the initial stage. Whatever the structure of initial training, a better balance in teacher training courses is needed between theory and classroom practice, with more emphasis on the professional concerns of educating children. Courses should include major elements of supervised teaching practice involving managing classroom and learning situations, for it is in mastery of these skills that teachers have often been weakest. Those tutoring primary teacher trainees should have a genuine professional grounding in the challenges and needs of primary education as a specialism in its own right and with its own profile. Britain now proposes that college tutors spend a term every five years back in the classroom. Botswana and Kenya are among the countries that have developed courses in their universities to provide professional leadership in primary education.

38 One way of getting initial teacher training closer to practice is to operate the training itself on an in-service rather than a pre-service basis, and to mix on-the-job training with periods of institutional enrolment. Many different patterns of training have been used in Commonwealth countries including the use of distance education combined with periods at college as in Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Where some of the training is done on an in-service basis through distance education or in other ways it is desirable to provide proper back up services for the periods spent in school with supervision by experienced teachers, group seminars with other teachers, and self-study programmes using well designed material.

Professional development of serving teachers

39 Once initial training is successfully completed, teachers require in-service training programmes and career structures to develop their competence and keep them up to date, which is especially important if government is introducing curriculum reforms. Barbados is one country that has mounted vigorous in-service training in the Teachers' College to respond to the new demands and challenges facing its teachers. Such opportunities should be provided on a systematic basis and should be available to all teachers. Teacher motivation will be increased if it is known that increased competence will be recognised and rewarded in terms of promotion, extra increments

and professional recognition. Teachers need to feel that professional advancement will follow efforts that they themselves can make and is at least partially within their own control. Staff development programmes should be widely conceived to embrace far more than formal in-service training courses: opportunities to participate in professional associations, examinations work or curriculum development groups should be part of the overall package. Structured experiences can also be provided in the schools themselves.

40 In support of staff development activity an efficient teacher record system and a sympathetic personnel management structure is vital. Effective staff deployment, professional development and promotion procedures depend on efficient registries and the systematic maintenance of full and accurate records. Staff development would be facilitated where profiles of teacher competence have been worked out. Teacher appraisal systems also depend on this: through appraisal teachers should be enabled to identify their own strengths and levels of competence, and to seek means for improving them. This is an area where some countries have extended their range of experience recently and where exchanges among Commonwealth countries would be fruitful.

Boosting teacher morale

41 Change in education depends on a well-motivated teaching force which not only willingly co-operates in the achievement of goals set by the authorities; but also participates actively in formulating objectives, in designing programmes to achieve them and in appraising the results. Five routes to boosting teacher morale can be suggested:

(a) Role definition. Teachers must be given manageable tasks. The expectations of them in terms of the range of content they are expected to master, the physical conditions with which they have to cope in terms of class size and spread of learning ability, availability of furniture, equipment and materials, reporting requirements - all these must be brought within the competence of the average teacher at the time the changes are first introduced.

(b) Support mechanisms. Teachers need practical help through guidance notes and resource books setting out possible ways of handling the problems with which they are confronted; regular advisory visits and the chance to discuss their problems both with their peers and with more experienced senior education personnel; the provision of accessible resource centres with libraries and workshops; education journals and newsletters; radio programmes on professional topics; exhibitions, and opportunities to engage in curriculum development. Teachers should also be encouraged to support each other through professional associations, through teachers' centres and collaboration in school clusters.

(c) Terms and conditions of service. In many Commonwealth developing countries the remuneration of teachers has fallen considerably in recent years forcing many of them to rely on second and third jobs to obtain sufficient income. Where it is financially impossible to give teachers substantial across the board rises in salary, every effort should be made to structure terms and conditions of service so as to provide strong financial and other incentives for professional self-improvement. Prospects of promotion and career progression should also be evident to those who seek more responsibility and rewards. Other issues like promotion prospects, training opportunities and study leave, allowances, housing provision, pensions, leave arrangements, grievance procedures and so on are also important constituents of the overall package of terms of service. The country papers provide numerous illustrations of the kind of action that might be taken: for example favourable mortgage guarantees and vehicle loans (Zimbabwe) pensions (Malawi) housing (Swaziland) grievance procedures (Guyana) posting procedures (Cyprus) study leave (Jamaica).

(d) Teacher deployment. The importance of instituting a system of teacher deployment combining as much individual choice of posting as possible, arrangements for proper staffing of hardship posts, and fairness to individuals in terms of equality of reward and sacrifice is hard to exaggerate. Arbitary central posting arrangements can cause great dissatisfaction and bitterness, involve a disproportionate amount of energy on the part of teachers trying to get posting changed, and is a major cause of teacher absenteeism, turnover and wastage.

(e) Recognition. The restoration of teacher morale can also be helped by teachers being given proper public appreciation and recognition, particularly by political leaders but also by the press, and by the community. Jamaica has a special Teachers' Day every year when the role of teachers is singled out for attention in the national press and local ceremonies are held. Some countries have prizes and award schemes for teachers. Professional recognition by peers is important too: articles in teachers journals extolling models of good practice and identifying those who have done particularly well are a useful vehicle for this.

Curriculum and Materials

42 Much of the effort to improve the quality of basic education inevitably revolves around reform of the curriculum - what should be learned and how it should be taught and assessed. The country papers make clear the high priority that countries assign to review and revision of the curriculum in their overall strategies to raise quality. Malaysia for example refers to curriculum reform, and associated changes in the system of assessment as being the focus of its efforts.

43 The process of developing the curriculum must begin with a specification of goals. This needs to be the subject of wide consultation, as Commonwealth experience confirms, if there is to be a sense of 'ownership' of the curriculum on the part of the teachers who have to activate it and of the parents and communities whose support is essential. The many interest groups in society need to agree on the selection of aims, goals, language and content including pruning content from an overcrowded curriculum. Close involvement of experienced and practising teachers is necessary at every stage of curriculum development if the activity is not to become isolated from classroom reality. Teachers should be involved as far as possible at the design stage and later with the testing in schools, when enough time must be allowed for the careful preparation and trialling of teachers' guides and of textbooks and for their distribution to the schools. This should be followed up by arrangements for feedback from schools during the process of implementation.

44 Considerable attention is being devoted by some countries to matching the content of the curriculum to the stage of development of the learners and to sequencing of the material to represent appropriate increments in the knowledge and skills and conceptual development that may be expected at each stage. A number of countries - Britain is an example - are also giving attention to making explicit the competences that pupils should be able to demonstrate at different stages and the kinds of test that would make it possible to know what progress has been made. This kind of specification of content and expected outcomes is seen as essential to monitoring of learning progress and to ensuring that pupils are not just attending school but benefitting from it in the intended way.

45 A good curriculum is expected to display appropriate breadth and balance, and relevance; and to allow for some differentiation to fit the interests and capacities of different learners. A curriculum which fails to provide for the many different dimensions of skill and competence sought in human beings would be considered seriously deficient. In fact a remarkable degree of convergence is reported between countries' allocation of time to different content areas in the primary curriculum with a norm of roughly 35% of the time devoted to language and about half that to mathematics. Developing countries give rather more time to practical and vocational subjects than do high-income countries. Content areas or 'subjects' are not the only dimension in which balance is needed, however: there should also be a broad range of pedagogical approaches so that learners are exposed to different activities, experiences and ways of working and where possible to using different types of technology (audio and visual equipment, computers) to assist their learning.

46 A major challenge is to differentiate the essential core content from other material, reflecting the need to ensure that all the children in a given society have some common grounding of essential knowledge and skills. A second impulse to define a core is in order to resist the intense pressures on curriculum

time from new knowledge and expectations: the information explosion and a belief that children should all learn science, the demand that they should be conversant with facts and concepts regarding the environment, drugs and disease, civic responsibilities, computers and the new technologies. Innovations in curriculum renewal exercises have tended to include new areas not as separate subjects but as special options; as new content within existing subject areas; or as thematic approaches cutting across subjects.

47 The curriculum must also be relevant. This implies a link up with the culture and everyday experiences of learners so that connections are made and the desire to learn reinforced. Relevance also applies to fitting learners for their future roles. Most often this is seen as preparation for work; but for other pupils the immediate destination will be secondary school and later higher education. Relevant education should include also preparation for roles as family members, as citizens, as members of the church or sports club, as consumers as well as producers. Once again in seeking relevance the curriculum must aim to balance specific knowledge and skills needed for foreseeable roles, with a flexibility that will make people socially and economically mobile and capable of adapting to an unknowable future. The learner must be neither 'locked into' nor 'locked out of' potential future roles and occupations.

48 In planning and implementing curriculum change the need to link up with work in teacher education and examinations is clear. Examinations should be the servant of the curriculum but can all too easily become its master. Clarity in curriculum design about how and when aptitudes and abilities will be assessed should be a central concern. It is equally important that in programmes of teacher preparation the trainees are given a good grounding in the aims and assumptions of the curriculum and fully absorb its underlying philosophy.

49 Materials and textbooks are an essential part of the curriculum development process. In many education systems it is only from the textbook that pupils can understand the structure and sequence of what they are to learn. Where teachers are inexperienced or weak, the textbook may constitute a useful prop for their work. However it is not the case that any books are necessarily better than none; poor textbooks with misleading information can confuse learners and leave them floundering. All the available evidence suggests that a plentiful supply of books and materials is associated with effective learning and that adequate financial provision to secure sufficient supply should be accorded priority. Smaller countries with their own national language or languages, unable to take advantage of economies of scale, face problems as regards costs and viability of local materials production. Adequacy of paper supplies, and difficulties of distributing books to schools are serious problems for many countries. These problems also apply to educational radio where the supply of batteries and the problem of maintenance of school radio sets have constrained its use despite some evidence that radio can extend and broaden curriculum experiences and can make for more efficient learning.

Assessment and Examinations

50 A good curriculum will provide for monitoring and assessment, offering feedback on stages reached and goals attained. Assessment systems often concentrate on only a few of the goals of education, and are by no means helpful to learners. They decree 'passes' and 'failures' without helping learners and even their teachers to know where success is achieved and to gain confidence from that knowledge: nor to know where errors have been made and to understand why, so that they may be corrected in future. A good assessment system will exhibit features of validity and reliability, will relate to the range of aims that the education system has, and will be user friendly.

51 The assessment system provides teachers, pupils and others in education with a means of monitoring their own progress and, if there is proper feedback, the lessons that are learned about successes and difficulties can help to improve performance. At the same time the most prominent assessment instruments, i.e. examination results, have market value in themselves for the individual in terms of access to rewards and jobs in society. High pass rates may help schools to attract good students and extra resources, while teachers of classes with good scores may earn greater respect and faster promotion. This poses the danger that schools will teach to the examination, instead of the assessment and examination system serving the curriculum and yielding important diagnostic benefits. It is most desirable that the assessment system is educative in terms of providing feedback to help improve performance and is not used as an arbitary system of power to classify sheep and goats or to hand out rewards and punishments.

52 Many Commonwealth countries are seeking to refine their assessment instruments to improve their validity (do they actually measure what they claim to be measuring?), their reliability (do they work consistently well for different groups at different times?) and their technical efficiency (is the system secure, quick, cost-effective?). Assessment must also be seen to be strictly impartial. If parents distrust the fairness of teachers in course work assessment, for example, they will demand a return to formal public examinations.

53 As the country papers show, many education systems are attempting to broaden their concept of assessment and revise their examination systems. There are a number of important strands to such reforms:

(a) A widening of the skills tested and instruments used. Multiple choice tests need to be supplemented by skills of writing and constructing reasoned argument through essays and the like: it is interesting that the United States has recently found it necessary to take this route. Similarly oral and project work may be added to the written exam.

(b) Redesign of written examinations to involve not simply a recapitulation of knowledge acquired and memorised, but a test of higher cognitive skills inviting students to demonstrate their capacity to interpret evidence, to apply concepts and to solve problems.

(c) A shift in the base of testing from a normative system, measuring how well students are doing in relation to the performance of other pupils, to a criterion-referenced system which defines and tests the knowledge, skills and achievement which pupils are expected to display, usually in more discrete blocks. Here the student is in a sense competing against herself instead of against other students.

(d) Use of continuous assessment of pupils' course work, instead of sole reliance on terminal examinations, has many positive advantages in monitoring progress over the school year, providing feedback to students and, where longer term projects are assessed, encouraging students to devote effort to forms of work which require careful planning and perseverance in execution. Teachers need to be trained carefully for this type of assessment if parents are to have confidence in its fairness. Swaziland is one country which reports it is incorporating more continuous assessment into its evaluation procedures.

(e) The use of pupil records and pupil profiles which constitute a summary of the capacities that pupils have demonstrated and the competence that they have acquired. These stem from a proper recognition that learning is continuous and cumulative and that even those who leave early have successfully completed at least part of the journey. Profiles can be useful in helping the teacher to think more positively about students and what they are able to achieve, and also in deepening their awareness of the different forms of attainment which pupils may be expected to exhibit.

Organisation and Management

54 Features of the overall organisation and management of the system affect quality in significant ways. Some of the most important are briefly reviewed.

Organisation

55 One relevant aspect of organisation is the structure of the system in terms of the number of grades, the length of cycles and the differentiation of programmes and schools. No single structure can be prescribed as ideally conducive to quality for every country. It is important to adopt a structure which is adaptable in different parts of the country and does not disadvantage those in rural areas; that provides for learners to leave the system with credit when they need to do so; and which stresses continuity between stages, avoiding too many traumatic changes of location, language, school size, organisation (class

teaching to subject teaching) at a single point in time. The loss of identity when children move from a secure and friendly primary school to a large anonymous secondary school can be shattering to their confidence. Where middle or junior secondary schools exist the transition is less abrupt. Contacts between schools at successive stages is always helpful to smooth the problems of transfer.

56 **School size and organisation** can thus have an important impact on the quality of education. There appears to be no incontrovertible evidence that either large schools or small schools are intrinsically superior. Small schools are by their nature more close-knit, and relationships tend to be more intense: but they cannot offer the curriculum range of the larger school. Ways need to be found to combine the advantages of specialised facilities and wider choice that a large school gives, with the sense of community in the small one. Some Commonwealth countries have adopted the school cluster approach to provide small rural schools with more professional contact and shared specialised facilities. The subdivision of large schools into sections, year groups or houses can overcome some of the disadvantages of bigness.

57 **The prescribed education calendar** is an organisational feature that is thought to have a significant effect on quality. It has been claimed that actual pupil learning time in some developing countries is less than half of what is common in developed countries and this can have a serious effect on learning achievement. Adjusting the school calendar - with due attention to financial costs, social effects on families in terms of their children's time and services, and consequences for teacher ability to earn supplementary income - may be a useful way to raise pupils' learning.

58 **Policy on teacher deployment** is also a significant factor. Continuity of staffing is essential to a stable school community in which pupils know the teacher well and understand clearly what is expected of them. Deliberate policies are needed to promote continuity of tenure of posts by teachers and heads. Staffing stability is a major factor in the quality of education at school level, but it is one that has received rather little attention in policy statements and many countries keep no data on it. Teacher turnover can only be reduced however if a fair and considerate personnel administration of teachers exists.

Management

59 Management performs a number of key functions in strengthening education quality, including:

(a) Ensuring accountability and compliance with national policies and directives. Policies in force regarding the national curriculum, the number of days that schools should operate, the regulations concerning health and safety, maximum class size etc must be complied with. Regulations that are honoured more in the breach than the observance, because enforcement is impossible, should be amended. Few things are more destructive of morale than for the authorities to be seen to turn a blind eye to the flouting of rules and procedures. The use of education officers and inspectors, reports and return forms is needed to ensure compliance. A clear chain of command is necessary, with officers knowing to whom they are responsible for what.

(b) Support. The other side of the coin of supervision and inspection is active support and encouragement. A key function of education management is to provide teachers and heads with material and professional help needed to carry out the tasks assigned to them.

(c) Communication and co-ordination. Effective management clearly depends on good two-way communication between schools, local offices and the centre, as well as between parties at each of these levels. Decisions and directives from the centre must be based on first hand knowledge of local situations and direct consultation with those in the field. In a well managed system staff in the field can identify responsible managers by name.

(d) Monitoring and evaluation. The task of assessing progress in meeting goals for education development and improvement and initiating the necessary adjustments to policy and practice is one of the most important that managers undertake. It requires a well based information and research system in support of the administration.

(e) Resource allocation. A major function of management is to ensure that the necessary resources are available to carry out policies, as discussed further in paragraphs 88-95.

60 Education managers thus need both considerable knowledge about the system being administered and a range of professional, technical and organisational skills in the various areas of their work. Yet they are typically drawn from the ranks of school teachers and have not been specifically trained in the managerial tasks. This points to the need for staff development and support programmes in education management at all levels of the profession and suggests there is a case for drawing in some of the managers required from other sources. Whilst some of the needed skills can be acquired by experience on-the-job under supervision, formal or informal institution-based training opportunities should complement this.

61 Decentralisation is in certain respects a pre-condition for enhanced quality in so far as:

(a) It elicits participation and enthusiasm from those at local level who have a stake in the success of any new programme.

(b) Decisions can be taken more quickly.

(c) Resource allocations reflect the priorities of those on the spot: through being based on more accurate information, they may be more cost-effective.

62 Some advocate decentralisation of decisions about education spending to school boards (as for example in the British local management of school arrangements) as a way of increasing efficiency of resource use at school level. It has also been suggested that if decision-making is further devolved to the ultimate consumers (parents, as proxies for students) of education, this would enhance quality by making schools more accountable to their customers. Schools would then compete for students by improving standards.

63 Others would stress the need for certain safeguards for quality when decentralisation policies are adopted, arguing that:

(a) People at local level do not have sufficient expertise or training to make wise decisions on specialist matters, and these deficiencies must be made good.

(b) Some centrally provided services which rely on economies of scale to achieve viability may need to be protected. If local units were allowed to opt out of central services, things like schools broadcasting, library and health services, curriculum development centres could less easily be funded.

(c) Inequality between schools can become a serious problem. Some parents might fall through the net and have no access to an acceptable school.

D. IMPROVING SCHOOLS

64 It is in the school and classroom that education inputs are transformed into outputs and outcomes. It is here that educational processes take place and that formal learning occurs. For its quality the school does depend heavily on an adequate input of financial, professional and material resources from central and local administration. Yet it is generally agreed that some schools perform much better than others and that there are institutions which have good resources and facilities but which somehow lose their way. Only if the school as an institution is working well can the best efforts in curriculum development, examination reform or teacher training have their full intended effect.

The Good School

65 Several countries have drawn up checklists of characteristics that define the good school for use by advisers and inspectors (see for example the list from St Lucia reproduced

on p33 of Document 2/C). Guides for parents in choosing schools for their children may cover much of the same ground. The particular features that will be valued will vary between cultures and societies, as will the weighting between the different characteristics.

66 Among the features that have been identified as characteristic of good schools are:

(a) A clear philosophy and sense of purpose regarding what education is about and what goals and values are important, with the recognition that the schools' major role is that it is a place where children learn and grow.

(b) Firm leadership from an enlightened head, who adopts a participatory approach to management, especially in the distribution of functions, roles and responsibilities, including management of all resources.

(c) An atmosphere of orderliness in which expectations and obligations are regularly met, evident from e.g. regular staff and pupil attendance, completion of homework assignments and marking by teachers. Discipline is unobtrusive: self-discipline is in evidence.

(d) A management structure that encourages a sense of belonging and ownership through consultative processes among all staff, thereby contributing to stability and continuity of staffing.

(e) Provision of opportunities and a teaching-learning climate that recognises a wide variety of capacities and skills in pupils, allowing them to pursue special interests, and that help to develop and validate pupil learning and achievement.

(f) Promotion of opportunities for personal and professional development of teachers through in-service and on-the-job training, as well as provision of 'space' to experiment and to extend their professional horizons.

(g) Encouragement of close links with parents and the community, who might be viewed as partners in the education enterprise as they represent the clients of schools and a source of much needed resources.

Leadership: the Role of the Head

67 The role of the headteacher is crucial in providing leadership to the school community, in establishing a set of standards and expectations which all uphold, and in creating confidence in the institution. As leader of the community, the head is closely identified with the school's external reputation and with teachers' and pupils' perceptions of its image. The tone and ethos of the school will depend in large measure on the head's ability to provide inspiration and to generate enthusiasm. The head must take on other roles as:

(a) Professional leader of the teaching staff: guiding, assisting and encouraging them with their professional work and providing feedback on their strengths and weaknesses.

(b) Supervisor: ensuring that the school's performance conforms with regulations and expectations laid down externally, as well as with the rules of good conduct governing behaviour in school.

(c) Resources manager: seeking, negotiating and obtaining the resources required by the school; deploying teachers, classroom and teaching spaces in the most economical but pedagogically effective way possible, and ever striving to improve the productivity of the school and its facilities, and good performance by teachers and pupils.

(d) Diplomat: representing the school to the outside world, both the local community and the central education administration.

68 To perform these tasks well heads need effective authority over their schools ard staff and to be given positive backing of the education officers in local and central administration. They also need to be thoroughly prepared for the task. This requires a strong and effective system of selection, training, induction and professional support for school heads, with opportunities for in-service development at regular intervals.

The Curriculum in Action

69 The curriculum actually implemented in school is often very different from the intended curriculum formally set out in syllabuses and guidelines. Partly this is because the official curriculum may not be adapted to the reality of the classroom in terms of the actual skills and specialisation of the average teacher, the learning readiness of the pupils or their linguistic and other abilities. Moreover any constant turnover of teachers or lack of basic materials like paper, chalk and books may make it impossible to follow prescribed models closely. This puts a special responsibility on the teacher to be versatile and innovative in pursuing curriculum objectives.

70 Pupil-teacher interaction lies at the heart of education. Good teaching requires genuine interest in pupils, their families and what is going on in the community, linking this to classroom activities; ability to adapt curricular content to varying individual needs, flexibility in selecting learning experiences and materials as the situation demands, a repertoire of teaching strategies and skills to suit the range of age and abilities of pupils; creation of a relaxed and encouraging environment conducive to learning; and an understanding of the diagnostic and developmental as well as testing dimensions of assessment. Above all, successful teaching is characterised by a partnership where learning results from what teachers communicate in the way of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes; and from the way in which pupils interpret and re-process what is communicated, giving them ownership over what is taught.

71 Successful 'curriculum in action' depends largely on the teacher's skills in three particularly important areas: pedagogy, assessment and classroom management:

(a) Good pedagogy, includes both preparing and presenting material to pupils in a well-sequenced way and in helping them to make their own contribution to the education process. Different techniques of presentation of subject matter and the ability to combine materials in the form of textbooks, worksheets, audio-visual aids, radio broadcasts, activities and experiences inside and outside the classroom are an important part of the professional equipment of any teacher. Emphasis on thinking and reasoning skills, on problem solving and analysis should have priority over information and memorisation.

(b) Skills of assessment and diagnosis of pupils' progress enable the teacher to know what has been mastered and what is causing difficulty. The teacher should give learners as much feedback as possible, thus helping them to move forward with greater confidence. To do this effectively teachers need clear 'maps' of the learning outcomes they are trying to achieve with their pupils and effective ways of testing attainment. Many countries are trying to develop systems to elaborate the knowledge, concepts and skills that make up the content of education and different ways of measuring their acquisition.

(c) Skills of classroom management are particularly vital but often overlooked in training courses. Their neglect is partly responsible for the misuse of classroom time that has often been observed. A well organised teacher devotes most of the available classroom time to learning activities and relatively little to taking class registers, moving furniture, distributing materials and so forth. There are particular skills involved in combining large group activity, work in small groups and individual attention: yet in some schools the variety of possible strategies seems hardly to be recognised. In countries where multigrade teaching is commonly practised a special need is the preparation of teachers to cope with this.

72 A good classroom combines liveliness with orderliness, with the teacher and student engaged in purposeful activity within a framework of clear expectations. Relationships of affection and respect between teachers and pupils in which the latter are encouraged to work together and take responsibility are conducive to learning and to the moral and social development of the child.

73 Desirable social experiences of depth and intensity are more difficult to provide in large classes. Although some recent studies conclude that class-size reductions below 50 would produce only limited gains in test achievement and could therefore prove a prohibitively expensive means of improving quality, such judgements need to be assessed in terms of the objectives sought. Parents and teachers recognise the value of personal attention, and the importance of relationships with

supportive adults, for the personal and social development of children; and it takes a quite exceptional teacher to develop individual relationships with pupils, or to give personal attention to those with special needs, in such large classes. In other words if a rather formal pedagogy is assumed to be unchanged it may be that larger class size would produce worthwhile savings with small loss of attainment: but smaller classes could make possible a more interactive pedagogy and make possible a wider range of valuable learning outcomes.

School and Community

74 A key characteristic of the quality of schools is the relationship with the community. Schools exist to serve their communities, drawing children from them and returning school leavers to them: benefitting from community resources and in turn enriching those resources.

75 A close partnership between home and school is an indispensable foundation for the school's work. Parental interest, approval and support create the right conditions for their children's motivation to learn and their regular attendance at school. Parent-teacher associations can play an important role of monitoring what goes on within the school. Where PTAs have a voice in planning and budgetary allocation, they are likely to be a more active in seeking resources to augment those from central government. But school-community relations involve more than parental contact, for schools also need to be linked with the wider life of the community; with welfare organisations and social services, with churches and mosques, with employers and community leaders.

76 A range of strategies have been used to develop a fruitful relationship between the school and the community and so to assist in the management of schools, in providing resources for them, and in supporting work on the curriculum. This is obviously easier in the case of fairly compact rural communities with their own sense of identity, and more of a challenge in an urban area where the population is more mobile and the sense of community membership less strong.

(a) The strengthening of community participation in school management can increase the effectiveness of schools as has been shown for example in the case of the Community Junior Secondary Schools in Botswana.

(b) Community leaders especially in rural areas are likely to be willing to help choose the site for a school, to advise on design and materials and to mobilise assistance for building them. Communities have wider functions than material support or the raising of finance, however. They may be consulted on curriculum content, for only those initiatives that receive full community support are likely to be freely and enthusiastically adopted and to become part of the permanent provision. They can often assist in selected curriculum areas by offering facilities for practical learning activities and supplying adult specialists to make a contribution to teaching.

(c) Some schools accept the responsibility of providing community education services to different groups within the community, thus linking formal school with out-of-school education. Wider basic education opportunities for adults or young people out of school may demand new forms of co-operation, making school facilities available to learners beyond the school walls.

77 Experience suggests that greater decentralisation of functions to the locality and community requires communication and trust between government and community. If an education authority is seen as simply trying to devolve financial and other responsibility on to communities without making available commensurate resources or sharing decision-making, then disaffection and conflict instead of partnership can result.

E. OUT-OF-SCHOOL EDUCATION

78 This paper has concentrated mainly on improving school education. However, as discussed in paragraph 10, one can conceive of basic education as following three tracks of which primary and junior secondary school education is only one. A second track is basic education for children out of school. The third track is education for adult learners which may concentrate on literacy, but is equally likely to be directed to vocational knowledge and skills, to community responsibilities or to concerns of the home.

79 In considering policy one needs to distinguish between three groups of countries: those that have achieved universal, usually compulsory, basic education; those that are nearly there so that a programme of universal basic education means reaching the most deprived and remote last 5 to 15 percent; those where, say, more than 15 to 20 percent of school-age children are still outside its walls. The attention paid to the education of adults - those deprived of education by their generation rather than their geography - is likely to be a function of the earlier rate of growth of the educational system and of the perceived needs of out-of-school children. Policy will, as ever, be constrained by resources. The cost per child of reaching the last five per cent of children will be higher than that of the first 50 per cent. Programmes for out-of-school education may have to compete for resources with programmes for adults. In practice some countries have concentrated their energies on younger adults rather than older, putting arguments of economic pragmatism above those of equity.

80 Programmes for out-of-school children vary along one other dimension: between those designed to lead children into school

and those designed to be an alternative to it. The former are of obvious value where schools exist but where children do not get to them. Where there are no schools, or where children cannot for practical reasons attend them, questions need to be addressed about the quality that can be achieved in something that is not quite a school but has similar functions and often even fewer resources. Several countries both Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth have programmes of significant size catering for out-of-school children. One outstanding example among many is Bangladesh's Alternative Primary Education Programme operated by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC).

81 These parallel tracks should not be seen as entirely separate from the school system. As discussed in paragraph 76, the school can make an important contribution to out-of-school education. It can share its teaching and recreational facilities with adults, make available school equipment, adult education programmes, and in some cases share teachers.

82 In the case of the out-of-school children, relationships may be even closer and the flexible adjustment of hours and content of regular school programmes may make it possible to open up access to others in the community. Where special programmes are laid on for out-of-school children, who cannot attend regular school because of family responsibilities and the need to earn a living, flexibility of timing is of the essence. Because the hours of learning of such children will tend to be shorter, concentration often has to be on basic skills of literacy and numeracy, greater reliance on materials is needed than in schools.

83 Adult basic education is noted above all for its variety. A first task in planning provision at this level is to identify the different categories of learners. In many countries where illiteracy is high, female illiterates tend to be much more numerous than male and in general women should be given priority in these programmes, both because of their numerical majority but also reflecting their key role in the family and in the upbringing of children. In trying to improve basic education for adults even more attention than in the case of schools should be paid to questions of motivation. The educational time on task is important and in turn depends on regular attendance and the incentives that learners have to maintain their interest. In this respect the relevance of programmes, the attractiveness and intelligibility of learning materials and the skill and sensitivity of teachers are prime factors. Generally basic education programmes for children and out-of-school adults would benefit from being given more 'form' and 'status'. Greater clarity in terms of expectations, a better defined status of teachers, standardised assessment and monitoring procedures, clarity about expectations on the side of administrators, teachers and students would be helpful. The role of information services - the press, radio and television - as well as newspapers and libraries is particularly important in backing up basic education efforts for adults.

F. IMPLEMENTATION AND RESOURCES

Implementation

84 The gap between prescription and reality has often tended to be wide, with efforts in government and elsewhere being concentrated on drawing up policies and plans, blueprints for curriculum change and administrative regulations of various kinds. The country papers which follow discuss efforts to improve quality largely in terms of machinery and policies established at national level, and of budgeted inputs: much less in terms of the mobilisation of effort by local administrators, heads, teachers and parents, and of the kind of incentives that may be needed to secure compliance at local and school level and in the classroom.

85 There is a long catalogue of things that might be done to bring about quality improvement. Many countries are in a quandary about where to begin. It seems advisable therefore to draw up a strategy for improvement setting priorities at each level of education from national level down to regions, districts and schools. Schools and departments within schools too can usefully draw up their own plans.

86 The important thing is for these plans to be fully realistic. It is no use drawing up fine new systems for the appraisal of teachers if it would require 2000 files annually to pass over the Chief Education Officer's desk; or if there are not, and not likely to be, any vehicles for supervisory staff to visit schools. Moreover, the capacity of the human resource has constantly to be borne in mind. Some reform schedules introduced by developing and industrialised Commonwealth countries have demanded a superhuman effort of the average classroom teacher and head, imposing on them additional tasks and reporting schedules. Sometimes it would be physically difficult to accommodate in the time available, even if sufficient motivation was also provided in the way of recognition and rewards. Sometimes it is pupil capacity that is over-estimated, with wrong assumptions being made in curriculum materials and textbooks about pupils' level of understanding.

87 Two lessons follow. The first is the need for a proper situation analysis before plans are promulgated and for close consultation with those in regular contact with school and classroom situations. Second, it is better to start with limited objectives. This implies not attempting to change everything at once, but choosing things that are manageable and within the capacities of the classroom teacher or the school to implement, in a period of one or two years; eschewing those innovations which call for non-dependable actions and interventions by others, or which would take six or seven years to bring to fruition. Examples of rather limited initial objectives might be:

In school:

to institute a weekly staff meeting.

to arrange a termly or biannual meeting for parents to meet teachers.

to put in place a system that ensures punctuality and attendance by staff and pupils.

for the head to require a detailed weekly scheme of work to be prepared by each teacher.

At national level:

to institute measures to reduce teacher turnover

to put a copy of the syllabus into every school, and teachers guides into the hands of each teacher.

to overhaul the teachers registry with an efficient system for storing and accessing files.

to provide every teacher with a 'user-friendly' guide to, the teachers service regulations and to teachers' terms and conditions of service.

to replace promotion systems giving increments or higher pay scales to those getting additional academic qualifications, with ones that reward enhanced professional competence.

to institute national programmes for training heads.

88 Finally, attention is needed to strategies for diffusion of reforms and innovations. The pilot project approach which tests out an innovation before wider diffusion has much to commend it if the pilot school or district is typical of general conditions in the system, and the proposed innovation is fully sustainable at national level. The pilot project, where performance is constantly under scrutiny and personal efforts are noticed, may be able to generate motivation and enthusiasm that will be absent when full-scale implementation takes place in the average school in a rural location 150 miles from the capital city. Problems of replication will be exacerbated if external donors are providing special inputs of expertise or equipment to expedite the development process in the trial project. There are also problems of 'going to scale', and of dealing with reforms which have got stuck half way in the implementation stage because of the phasing out of external assistance or of changed domestic financial conditions.

Resources

89 Improvement of quality in the various ways identified in this paper requires resources of various kinds. Principally, when speaking of resources, we think of finance. A resource in

some ways as important as finance is the leadership, energy and motivation of ministers and public servants, local communities and of professionals working in education. What children and adult learners need as much as financial resources is the time, care and concern of educators: the classroom teacher at the bottom of the hierarchy needs the same support from the top. Mobilising such resources will not be costless even in financial terms, but a system that is fired with enthusiasm can draw on resources of time and commitment far beyond what any narrow entitlement would involve. In special situations many of the inputs to education - buildings, equipment and materials and even teachers - can be the subject of improvisation in a society which is engaged in an active campaign to take education to its people.

90 By definition 'special situations' are the exception rather than the rule, however, and it would be dangerous folly to rely on short-term enthusiasm to carry a system through to success. Hard choices have to be made in education spending, and policy makers will sometimes have to choose between buying more and buying better. In making these decisions it seems likely that the provision of incentives to teachers and others for innovation and effort directed to qualitative improvement would be investments yielding particularly high returns. Resources put into salary restructuring, rewarding responsibility, or into professional support services to help teachers do their job better, must have a high priority.

91 In considering the domestic options in resourcing quality improvement, countries have a limited number of alternatives open to them. They are:

(a) To increase public revenue, mainly through taxes.

(b) To shift resources from other public services to education.

(c) Within education to invest more in basic education and less at the other levels. It is probably only possible to do this gradually, through increased allocations in successive budgets, themselves growing in monetary terms (because of inflation) as well as in real terms.

(d) User charges on learners and their families. These run counter to the other objectives of Education for All in terms of wider access, since they directly discourage attendance and contribute to inequality.

(e) To deploy existing inputs more efficiently, releasing resources in order to achieve quality gains. There will be cases where amalgamations of classes and schools, dropping of costly specialised options and courses, substitution of robust 'value-for-money' inputs in place of luxury items, can be made. There are the easy choices, relatively speaking since they do not apparently involve much sacrifice. The major resource-saving suggestions however usually touch directly on teacher-pupil ratios, lessening the teacher-intensiveness of operations.

One-way teacher instruction may not be adversely affected to an undue extent by this: but two-way teacher-pupil interaction is likely to be. But this is a matter of hard choices and priorities, and a country may reluctantly decide to let class sizes slip from say 39 to 42 in order to pay for transport for advisers or to give a language and mathematics textbook to each pupil in primary school.

92 The most sensitive and influential of these issues concerns teachers' salaries. In many countries their level is inadequate to provide a decent standard of living at even a basic level for teachers, let alone to attract the best talent into the profession. Yet salaries account for the bulk of government expenditure and any significant change in their level across the board could have the severest repercussions for government expenditure. The way forward out of this seeming impasse must surely involve reorganising the teacher salary structure to provide a better career progression, tying salary more closely to enhanced responsibility and increased professional competence, with less weight on academic status and initial professional qualification. But change must be gradual, with the closest consultation with representatives of the profession. It also requires detailed work on teacher appraisal, and consideration of how far the diagnostic and self-learning elements in appraisal can or should be separated from appraisal for promotion purposes.

93 The final option is to tap external resources. However the real situation, as reiterated in Jomtien and which cannot be too often repeated, is that external debt repayment and servicing is draining a huge volume of resources from developing country budgets and is making it difficult to spend the needed amounts on basic education. In any case for a variety of well-understood reasons the direct transfer of external resources to basic education is complicated:

(a) Basic education mainly requires goods purchased locally and not imported goods.

(b) It consists mainly of recurrent expenditure rather than investments and so appears to resemble a 'bottomless pit'.

(c) It is very much tied to local cultural values, and local languages, making imported personnel somewhat ineffective.

(d) The schools and students represent a very large system, widely dispersed, where it is not easy to make any concentrated impact quickly. This is a disadvantage if assistance donors seek quick and visible pay-off of their assistance.

94 Successful co-operation projects have been designed and implemented despite these obstacles and the conditions of success should be investigated. The 'absorptive capacity' of countries for aid to basic education is naturally greatest for freely disposable cash generated either by debt forgiveness or by local

currency produced by the sale of goods brought into the country under general import programmes. Assistance with the supply of paper is also flexible and useful. Technical assistance projects are more difficult to implement successfully at basic education level, but a number of examples exist of useful assistance to curriculum centres, teacher training colleges and examination systems where the external inputs have been used in support of locally-led initiatives.

95 Finding extra money for education, internally or externally, will not be easy. It will be less difficult to the extent that identifiable benefits are associated with provision of additional funds, and that the endeavour is a shared one. External agencies look particularly to evidence in policy statements, budgets and development plan of commitment to basic education as a priority on the part of developing country governments.

G. COMMONWEALTH CO-OPERATION

96 Strengthening the quality of basic education is essentially a matter for national action. Reference has been made in para 93 to the difficulties, and to the more promising possibilities, of direct assistance at this level of the education system. The Commonwealth might in addition use its collective influence in encouraging the creditor countries and international bodies to consider sympathetically any proposals for using debt relief or 'debt swaps' for assistance to national efforts on behalf of Education for All; and in adjusting education assistance policies and programmes to provide resources in a flexible and readily usable form. Commonwealth bilateral agencies and the Secretariat could play an active role in working with others in the donor community and with developing countries to develop new mechanisms for transferring resources to assist basic education.

97 There may be countries which contemplate a major qualitative reform programme incorporating several elements and which would welcome Commonwealth and other assistance on a rather large scale, using a consortium approach. In these instances the Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation could explore the scope for mobilising a group of Commonwealth donors to help support a wide package of measures proposed by the country concerned. In appropriate cases non-Commonwealth agencies could usefully contribute to the collective effort: in other instances Commonwealth inputs might support action co-ordinated by another agency.

98 There may be scope for collaborative projects between Commonwealth countries on a regional basis. The existing regional examination bodies which serve groups of Commonwealth countries in the Caribbean, West Africa, and the South Pacific might form one base for initiatives in those areas. In the

Southern Africa region the Secretariat has worked with a number of countries on the issues of teacher information records and personnel management in national education systems. In this case assistance has been given in support of national efforts; training programmes and international attachments have been arranged; a resource book has been produced. The Secretariat is exploring with other international and bilateral agencies the possibility of extending this project, which might serve as a model for activities in other areas of quality improvement.

99 There is a rich pool of experience and ideas, including those described in the country papers, on which others may wish to draw. The Commonwealth Secretariat, in partnership with other agencies when appropriate, can help to promote exchanges of experience in a number of ways:

(a) Convening pan-Commonwealth and regional meetings for exchange of experience in specific areas.

(b) Sponsoring study visits to observe interesting reforms in another Commonwealth country.

(c) Commissioning and publication of case studies on relevant topics.

(d) Preparation of guides and resource books setting out possible options for action, e.g. in patterns of pre-service training, local publication of textbooks, use of radio in schools, teacher appraisal systems.

(e) Mounting specialist training courses and providing fellowships.

(2) A SURVEY OF COMMONWEALTH EXPERIENCE

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IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF BASIC EDUCATION

AN OVERVIEW OF COUNTRY PAPERS*

I INTRODUCTION

During the past 25 years education throughout the Commonwealth has expanded dramatically. Today nearly eight out of ten of its children attend primary school. For well over half of these, this represents all the formal schooling they will receive. As such, educators, parents, employers and politicians expect them whilst at school to achieve a great deal: to become effectively literate and numerate; to acquire knowledge and skills in preparation for secondary education or if they don't get there to make a living; to learn to respect their traditional cultures; to become effective participants in a modern society; and to become both responsible citizens and self-reliant individuals capable of leading productive and enjoyable lives in times of great change. Such expectations, when held in an era of harsh economic realities, pose a serious challenge to all people concerned with improving the quality of basic education.

The purpose of this overview is two-fold. First, it aims to provide a stimulating and useful framework for analysing and discussing policies and practices aimed at improving quality; and second, to use this framework to present a variety of Commonwealth country experiences - past achievements, particular successful or unsuccessful projects, and ways forward - which may be of interest to countries addressing similar challenges.

The overview is structured around four headings. The first, the introduction, establishes the background to the debate: the international historical and economic context, some understanding of the concepts of quality and basic education, and a set of six identified national areas of concern. In the second section experiences of improving quality have been organised in terms of these six areas. The rationale for this has come from both a reading of the country papers received** and research recently completed by the author into international efforts to improve the

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*The Commonwealth Secretariat wishes to acknowledge the important professional contribution made to this paper by Dr David Stephens, University of Sussex.

**Based on 48 papers received (by 31 August 1990) from: Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Botswana, Britain, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Cyprus, Dominica, The Falkland Islands, The Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Malaysia, Malawi, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Montserrat, Namibia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tonga, Trinidad & Tobago, Turks & Caicos Islands, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

1 **Pressures on the Education System**

The 25 year post-independence period witnessed an unprecedented growth in all sectors of education. This was particularly so between 1976 and 1986 when enrolments increased by 174% in primary schools, by 123% in secondary technical schools and by 129% in the high schools. This was accompanied by increased activity in the non-formal sector where literacy classes were started in all parts of the country and some 50 pre-school institutions were opened. By the end of the period Government was committing 13.3% of its recurrent budget (20% excluding debt servicing) to the Education vote, a substantial investment augmented by generous support from donor agencies and NGOs and by self-help programmes initiated by local communities.

In spite of these achievements it was clear that in the face of resource constraints and a rapidly increasing population we were not succeeding in our aim of providing access to a relevant and broad-based education at primary level.

By 1987 our primary schools could still accommodate only 60% of the school-age population, and of those who did complete the 6 year primary cycle only about 30% were able to continue their formal education at secondary level. The rate of illiteracy in the adult population was estimated to 80%.

Inevitably, as the rate of expansion continued to exceed the capacity of Government to provide the additional resources needed to sustain it, the quality of education, particularly in the primary schools began to deteriorate. 60% of primary teachers were unqualified and had received no teacher training before being posted to the schools, and school buildings had deteriorated to the point where 47% of primary classrooms were classified as temporary structures. Half of the children in them had no proper desks or chairs and there was a chronic shortage of textbooks, stationery and teaching/learning materials.

The Gambia

quality of primary education in developing countries.* Within each of the six areas of concern an effort has been made to identify the major policy issues with concrete examples of 'waysforward' drawn from the country papers. The third section briefly examines the contribution international co-operation has made and can make to programmes to improve education; and in particular where assistance from abroad has proved or could prove helpful. The conclusion addresses the larger question of appropriate strategies in Commonwealth countries if improvement of the quality of basic education is to be achieved.

The Background: The International Context

Jacques Hallak** writing recently about current challenges facing the developing world suggests that the so-called 'world education crisis' has its genesis in the radical changes that have taken place in many countries since the 1960s. He cites problems of escalation of costs and expenditure; doubts about relevance of the curriculum for emerging social and economic needs; imbalances between supply and demand for educated manpower leading to further imbalances between educational aspirations and employment opportunities; a growing problem of educated unemployment; and continuing or widening gaps between standards and participation in rural and urban areas. He believes these problems have not been overcome but have continued throughout the decade of the 1970s into the 1980s. He suggests, too, that the early 1980s have seen a new crisis developing. The major recession which began in the industrialised countries after the oil price shock in the mid-1970s spread throughout most developing countries in the late 70s and early 80s and led to balance of payments and budget deficits which severely affected the capacities of governments to finance education. This added a new dimension to the problems and imbalances that were already rooted in the educational systems.

Country papers reveal an all too familiar picture of internal and external pressure upon the education system: growing demand for school places accompanied by heavy drop-out rates; sluggish flow and repetition; fierce competition for admission; an over-concentration on the academic aspect at secondary level; a neglect of technical and vocational courses, especially the terminal ones; wide disparities among highly vulnerable non-formal programmes; literacy campaigns that cannot be completed, let alone followed up; convergent pressures of the financial squeeze and of sheer numbers threatening timid advances in the quality of education; and the growing threat of unemployment at the end of it all (see Box 1).

Though there are exceptions to this realistic, if gloomy picture, in all too many countries there is a growing frustration as

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*Hawes, Hugh & Stephens, David Questions of Quality: Primary Education and Development, London: Longman, 1990.

**Hallak, J Investing in the Future: Setting Educational Priorities in the Developing World, Paris: Pergamon for UNDP, 1990.

2 Perspective on Basic Education

Basic education used to be conceived as primary and secondary level education up to the end of the junior secondary school (first three years of secondary schooling). However, technological advances have increased the complexities of ordinary life that a radical revision of basic education is necessary. In The Bahamas, basic education now encompasses the following:

(i) preparing the individual to meet the needs or demands of society;

(ii) the inculcation in the child of the ability to function as a useful member of his society;

(iii) instilling in the individual the ability to comprehend and communicate effectively and meaningfully in his native language;

(iv) the preparation of the individual to be functionally literate, well informed and an intellectually active citizen; living in harmony with the dictates of his environment, and being able to rise to meet the challenges of nation building; and

(v) to be able to compute and be knowledgeable of the technical advances existing in the World.

The Bahamas

3

Objectives for Improving the Quality of Basic Education

- raising the level of basic literacy, and skills training in students and the workforce and making education more relevant to contemporary circumstances and to Australia's Asia-Pacific location.
- meeting the special needs of girl students, of students from Aboriginal and non-English speaking backgrounds and of those who are disadvantaged as a consequence of socio-economic circumstances, geographic location or physical or intellectual disability

Australia

education tries to respond to ever changing needs with dwindling resources. Today, policy makers and practitioners face the dangers of stagnation and decline coupled with a strong desire to improve the quality of provision particularly at the level of basic education.

The Concepts: Quality and Basic Education

An immediate problem is clarifying and focussing upon what needs to be improved. Though the concept of quality, like parenthood, is patently a good thing it can easily become a bandwagon to which can be hitched all aspects of education, a rhetorical device even for masking the very things requiring reform. The recent 'Education for All' World Conference at Jomtien, for example, identified as key objectives a stronger emphasis on education for girls and women; an improvement in teachers' rights and status; a stronger emphasis on access and quality; and pressure for 'a trade-off between the debt burden and the search to extend education to all' (Norrag News June 1990).

With objectives like these in mind most Commonwealth countries now recognise a number of factors that provide common ground for defining the concept of quality. The quality of all education is concerned with such things as relevance to the child, the family, society, efficiency and the promotion of a more equitable society. Malaysia provides a useful operational definition of quality of education as 'the capability of the education system to meet desired standard in terms of relevance in its curriculum, effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery as well as equality in opportunities for all'.

Quality is not simply to be achieved at the expense of quantity or a reduction in access to provision. It is concerned with both a raising of standards of education, that is, improving on the progress made so far and in a balancing of a number of concerns. These relate to both the ends of education (particularly for the majority leaving school at the end of the basic cycle) such as numeracy, literacy, prevocational skills, healthy social attitudes; and the process of that education - the quality of learning experiences, the relationship between school and community, and the effective use of educational facilities (Box 2). Quality can thus be defined in such terms as relevance, equity, efficiency and a balance between ends and processes. In this vein, Box 3 illustrates the objectives Australia has identified as relevant to improvements in basic education. Many ministries/departments of education in Canada have arrived at definition of quality and its products (Box 4).

It seems useful in the framing of our deliberations, to be as clear too about the term basic education. Many would assume that the term basic education covers the activities of primary and junior secondary schools, and of programmes of out-of-school education at around the same level, both for children and for adults. Some Commonwealth countries define basic education by age level while others focus on the curricular content, skills and knowledge transmitted. The Commonwealth of Dominica, for example, defines basic education as that 'for children between the ages of three and fifteen'. Malaysia highlights basic skills

4 **Indicators of Quality**

In general, quality education is considered to be present when systems:

(a) monitor and reduce drop-out rates

(b) outline, assess, and improve achievement of basic skills

(c) outline, assess, and improve higher-level skills

(d) increase enrolment in university and college preparatory level courses

(e) increase female enrolment in mathematics and science

(f) monitor and evaluate student achievement in all courses

(g) provide evidence of excellence through comparative studies

(h) measure expectations of the public, educational stakeholders and students

(i) measure levels of satisfaction of the public, educational stakeholders and students

(j) monitor efficiency and effectiveness in administration

(k) facilitate learning experience of students with special needs learning and the provision of continuing education. Zambia draws attention to minimum learning needs for individuals to become 'effective participants in the advancement of the community'. Zambia also stresses its introduction of a new class of schools, basic schools, which will be a combination of primary and junior secondary schools offering nine years of general education. Trinidad & Tobago, like others echoing these intentions, also point to computer and environmental literacy as being 'necessary elements of basic life and survival skills'. Uganda call for 'an awareness and concern for the environment' and a 'development of democratic values'.

Basically countries throughout the Commonwealth are faced with two challenges:

- to protect and maintain the quantitative progress made over the past decades, which has seen a large majority of young children in school
- to examine now the qualitative dimension and the inputs and learning processes, the training and support given to teachers, the management and administration of the system, the means by which pupils and adults are assessed, and the system evaluated.

The Challenge: Identified Areas of Concern

(a) In terms of the **structure and organisation of the education system** itself countries have identified a number of inter-related concerns. As the Gambia example indicated earlier, high enrolment rates and greater access to basic education have in turn led to problems of high drop-out and poor completion rates. Maintenance of physical infrastructure, the condition of buildings, and provision of desks and learning materials have, in most cases, barely kept up with the demand. Some ministries of education view an extension of the system to embrace the needs of special groups - nomads, gifted children, and the handicapped - a priority. Others look to reforms that will radically restructure the Ministry, both administratively and professionally. The question of diversification of the system to provide more of a balance between the academic and technical/vocational is a perennial issue as is the wish to gain maximum efficiency from existing capacity. To improve overall running of the system (better training, rationalisation of resources), to maintain and improve buildings and materials, to extend access to disadvantaged groups and to provide a more diversified curriculum characterise major systemic and structural areas of concern.

(b) In the area of **curriculum, learning materials and assessment** country papers reveal a number of concerns that relate directly to issues of relevance and balance. In the case of some countries it is the content of curriculum that is a major focus of concern. The question of providing a relevant curriculum, particularly for countries with a predominantly agricultural society, is a recurring theme running throughout the papers. Many countries it seems have found it difficult to broaden primary curricula into new areas such as health and the environment despite a conviction that this should be done. There have been pressures to make curricula more vocational as well as powerful arguments against this. If curriculum content is regarded as important, so is curriculum development. Whereas in the past curriculum development was viewed largely in terms of materials production and syllabus design, countries are charging curriculum development centres with broader, more far-reaching activities. An innovation being embraced by some countries is distance learning. The related issue of methodology is surprisingly given less attention than one might expect. At the same time, many schools are short of materials to deliver the curriculum, lacking learning materials in the shape of books or radio support. The local production of textbooks that might serve countries in the region is seen as a possible new development. The age-old problem of assessment is raised by many countries. Whereas some see the problem as an over-reliance on summative examinations others direct attention to a strengthening of locally-based examinations and a move towards more criterion-referenced tests. The question of negative examination backwash remains and is one being tackled at Ministry and school level.

(c) Many, but by no means all, Commonwealth countries face absolute shortages of **teachers** and most are short of teachers in particular subjects. Throughout Commonwealth Africa large numbers of unqualified teachers remain in the schools. Few countries have been able to devote significant resources to the continuing education of teachers. Teacher training remains a high priority. Areas of concern cluster round two broad headings: the supply and training of teachers at pre-service level; the provision of adequate, flexible in-service support. Again the issues of relevance, efficiency and balance predominate.

(d) Problems of **management, administration, and planning** are widespread both at the level of the individual school and at those of district, regional or national education offices. They are compounded where education change makes new professional demands on teachers and brings in its train a need for better and more complex management systems. Three areas of concern can be identified from the country papers: the improvement of management at Ministry, district and school level; the over-centralisation of control of management, planning and administration; and the improvement in supervision and inspection services.

(e) The **relationship of school to community** embraces a number of issues, some over-lapping with areas of concern identified elsewhere. Community financing of basic education, the extension of school services to non-formal sectors of society, and the imbalance between provision for girls and boys, rural and urban, handicapped and healthy can be found in Commonwealth papers. Nigeria, in particular, devotes significant attention to the educational needs of nomads and to the development of programmes designed specifically for women who 'missed out' on formal education 'first time round'. In terms of curriculum an identified area of concern is the production of a diversified and adaptable curriculum which will meet the needs of those living in outlying or rural areas; those for whom travel is a way of life and for those with special learning problems that require an 'education for life' policy. The important role played by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) is also noted.

(f) The final area of concern is perhaps the most important. **Finance and resource** questions continue to dog developed and developing countries alike. For a substantial group of countries, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa, educational expenditure as a percentage of the national budget has declined more often than it has increased over the last decade. Three tendencies are of importance. First, debt servicing as a proportion of export earnings has grown sharply in the majority of developing countries since 1980. This has reduced the ability to finance basic education policies even where the willingness to do so remains high. Secondly, within that educational budget there is still the likelihood that the lion's share of the budget in terms of per capita spending, will fall on secondary and tertiary levels of education. Thirdly, in a significant number of countries, defence spending has grown rapidly. According to one recent estimate, in 40% of African countries affected by war over the last decade GDP growth has probably been suppressed by up to 3%. This has reduced public sector budgets as a whole, in addition to any redistribution towards defence related expenditure that may have taken place.

II NATIONAL EXPERIENCES IN IMPROVING QUALITY: POLICIES AND WAYS FORWARD

National efforts at improving quality may be examined in the six distinct and yet inter-related ways identified in the previous section.

1 STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Many countries are committed to a combination of policies related to improving quality. Among these, four areas emerge fairly consistently in the country papers:

(a) a rationalisation and building up of linkages between various components of the system and agencies within it concerned with such problems as adult literacy and special educational needs (Barbados, Malawi). Malaysia is one country which is giving consideration to improvements in the 'co-ordination and collaboration' of 'all sectors within and outside' the Ministry; Ghana is looking to its Non-formal Education Division to co-ordinate 'out-of-school' education for an estimated 50% of Junior Secondary school leavers whose basic learning skill acquisition 'will not be adequate for guaranteeing them gainful employment'.

> Ghana provides an example of work being undertaken by its Non-Formal Education Division to improve co-ordination of 'the large social sector with a view to revitalising the infrastructure, and providing materials, teaching aids, facilitator training' in order to advance programmes aimed at functional literacy. Improved linkages are being made through integrated planning of the social sector committees at regional and district levels; closer collaboration between international NGOs whose methods of programme implementation often result in vertical programming at national, regional and district levels; policy co-ordination at the national level to ensure comprehensive planning of manpower needs, logistics, training and economic structures for sustained growth; collection, analysis and dissemination of non-formal education information in simple comprehensive form for local people; co-ordination of educational materials development to enhance the acquisition of basic learning skills in the non-formal education sector; and co-ordination of provision of technical assistance and training of grassroot organisations for efficient manpower and leadership skills for development.
>
> In terms of rationalisation Guyana has established a system of school clusters, regional subject committees, and national subject committees to ensure that curricular proposals are being implemented effectively whilst Montserrat and Kiribati have amalgamated schools in order 'to utilise the staff more effectively' in order to ensure that some of the 50% of trained teachers are present in each school.
>
> Jamaica has implemented a pilot project intended to improve the quality of the educational offering in grades 7-9 of sixteen All Age schools. This involves the amalgamation of

5 Pre-School Education

Pre-school state kindergartens for children aged four and five years were first opened in every town and village in Malta, in 1975. They complemented the already widely existent privately owned kindergartens.

In September 1989 kindergartens opened their doors to the three-year-olds, after two years of preparation.

Attendance is voluntary. Nearly all four-year-olds are enrolled in either a state kindergarten or a private kindergarten. Regular attendance exceeds 75% of the age group on average. Response by parents of three-year-olds has been similarly overwhelming.

Kindergarten education aims at eliminating social and educational disadvatanges and paves the way towards formal schooling.

Malta

these grades within a four mile radius to form larger and more economical groups.

(b) an improvement in access 'downwards' to pre-primary level and 'upwards' to secondary level. 'Before and after' primary education - an expansion of the system to cater for pre-and-post basic education needs - is a policy priority of a number of countries.

Maldives is aiming at the target of universal basic schooling (grades 1-5) by the year 1995 and universal extended basic schooling (grade 6-7) by the year 2000. While universal primary schooling (UPS) has almost been achieved, basic education for all (BEA) is a major priority in policy but is still a distant goal.

Malta is an example of a country extending the availability of pre-school state education, in this case to all 3-year-olds (Box 5).

Malawi, keen to achieve a net enrolment ratio of 75% for the 6-14 year age group by 1995, is seeking to retain more pupils and teachers within the system by providing better quality school buildings, teacher housing and the encouragement of more private schools of 'adequate standard'.

The Gambia seeks to increase the number of children proceeding from grade 6 to grade 7 progressively from 30% to 60%.

The Seychelles, having established free universal pre-school education for ages 3.5 to 5, has moved towards the goal of universal basic education of ten years comprising 6 years of primary schooling, 4 years of lower secondary followed by a non-compulsory year with the National Youth Service; 96% of those aged 4-17 are enrolled in school or NYS, with policy now directed at the relevance and efficiency of that provision.

Zambia, encountering severe economic difficulties and aware that only 30% of candidates proceed from Grade 7 to Grade 8, looks to 'self-help action', and looks to parents and communities for meeting more of the costs of schooling (see 4 Finance and Resources).

Ghana has reduced the amount of prescribed time pupils should spend in school from 17 to 12 years (basic plus secondary education). This has lowered opportunity costs of schooling especially at basic level and has released funds to 'improve access and quality'. Free and universal basic education is therefore offered for the first 9 years of schooling.

(c) a more diversified system balancing the academic and vocational needs of pupils and adults. All countries place considerable importance on a diversification of the education system and the creation of a balance between the academic and prevocational and hence seek improvements in the links between school and work.

In Northern Ireland extensive links have been built between schools and the local business community. Individual firms, together with organisations representing employers such as the Confederation of British Industry and local Chambers of Commerce, are involved in a wide range of activities with schools, the overall objective of which is to enhance the relevance of the education process to adult working life.

Tanzania is equally keen to develop a system that balances academic education with schooling for work. Though mainly an agricultural country it has recently made moves towards diversified industrialisation. Consequently it sees ways forward in terms of 'increased provision of education in Language, Mathematics, Science and Technology' and the development of a system that both encourages entry into manufacturing, processing and service industries whilst providing children with an education that gives a high priority to protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources.

Britain provides a good example of efforts to provide an educational system that balances the academic with the technical and vocational. A complete overhaul of the system has led to a number of significant changes, in particular the introduction of a national curriculum (with foundation and optional subjects), new forms of assessment and a substantial reform of the management system.

(d) a concern for improved physical infrastructure (furniture, etc.). Several Commonwealth countries are clearly concerned about situations (those with stable school populations as well as those facing rapid expansion) where the quality of the system is severely constrained by a lack of suitable provision of physical amenities. The question of the quality of existing infrastructure is considered a priority, especially by countries hit hard by environmental problems (Montserrat, Jamaica) and by those who have seen a gradual decline in the quality of schools and colleges (Uganda). In Britain a January 1990 report by Her Majesty's Senior Chief Inspector of Schools indicated that 'the overall level of resources' for school maintenance fell 'well short of demand'.

Barbados has, under a second World Bank education project, begun an elaborate programme of rehabilitation, expansion, erection and equipping of school plants. Old schools are being closed and new ones erected to accommodate the shift in intramigrational movements. Small schools are being amalgamated through the building of strategically located new and better equipped ones. A planned consequence of this is cost effectiveness through the reduction mainly in headships required. For example, in the 1988-93 plan it is projected that 18 primary schools will be transferred to ten new buildings.

6 Physical Facilities

In pursuance of the various policy directions efforts were made to open more primary schools in the country especially in rural areas. This increase during the last decade is about 8.7% annually. The total number of primary schools in the country at present is 118,607; 91,274 for boys and 27,333 for girls. This includes about 20,000 mosque schools which impart education to both boys and girls up to class III. These schools provide education facilities to about 51% of 5-9 age group population only. This means more facilities ie more schools need to be opened if we intend to universalize primary education and provide access to school to each and every child of the country. This is a component of the education system which cannot be provided for with the minimum financial allocations available to the education sector. There is need to find out alternative approaches so that more and equitable facilities are made available to the children of the nation. The efforts include provision of more schools within 1.5 kilometers of each settlement. Simple and locally available furniture will be provided to primary schools in a phased manner.

In addition, some projects are being implemented in collaboration with foreign aid giving agencies such as World Bank, Asian Development Bank, USAID, CIDA and NORAD. Under World Bank funded three projects; one for NWFP, Sindh and Baluchistan, second for Punjab and third for Sindh, more rooms will be added to the existing one, two, three and four-room schools according to the local requirements, and to increase the capacity of such schools. Under ADB sponsored Girls Primary Education Project, 5-room schools (Community Model Schools) are being provided in about 800 rural Union Councils throughout the four provinces of the country on experimental basis with the objective to provide minimum basic facilities in order to achieve more participation, increased retention and low drop out of primary school age female children.

Pakistan

> Belize - The Caribbean Development Bank and USAID have assisted Belize in funding the construction of primary schools, thereby catering for an increased enrolment.
>
> Zambia has embarked on a more equitable distribution of basic schools with more planned for the urban areas and improvements in rural facilities where they are inadequate.
>
> Pakistan with support from external aid agencies continues to make progress in the provision of more and improved physical facilities (Box 6).

2 CURRICULUM, LEARNING MATERIALS AND ASSESSMENT

Curriculum

Policy statements on curriculum issues may be usefully explored in three broad areas: in terms of balance, relevance and in terms of innovative, technology-based organisation of teaching and learning as seen in distance learning.

(a) Maintaining a balance between what is essential and what is desirable continues to be a concern for a number of countries as their discussions on the core curriculum indicate. At the heart of efforts to raise standards lies the attempt to seek a balance in curriculum between content, knowledge, skills, attitudes and values; between the curriculum as terminal and as preparation for further education; between technical and vocational and academic orientations; between preserving the best from the past while preparing for the challenges of the next century; and between the ends of learning (products, outcomes) and the means to achieving them (processes, experiences).

> Britain. The National Curriculum which is being introduced gradually covers the period of compulsory schooling from ages 5-16 and comprises core subjects such as Science, Maths, and English (Welsh in Wales) and accompanying attainment targets. Other foundation subjects such as Technology, Humanities, Music, Art and cross-curricular areas such as Careers Education and Education for Economic Awareness are to be included in programmes of study at appropriate points. Pupils with special education needs and the place of religious education is given special mention.
>
> Malaysia. The New Primary School Curriculum has been introduced in stages since 1983, with emphasis given to the 'all round development of the child', skills acquisition in 3Rs, and measures to promote relevance e.g. Man and his Environment has replaced History and Geography. Remedial education is also given prominence (Box 7).
>
> Guyana. The core components of the curriculum - Language, Maths, Social Studies and Science - are taught concurrently with a set of practical technical/vocational and personal development subjects. 'For a majority of children, this curriculum is terminal; for a significant minority, however, it forms the basis for further education with an increasing

7 Curriculum Reform and Assessment

In Malaysia, a major effort towards improving the quality of education involved a nationwide review of our curriculum, both at the primary and secondary levels, as well as our system of assessment. Reforms in these two areas have necessitated changes in other areas of education such as teacher training, school management and other support services. Thus curriculum reform, and subsequently changes in the system of assessment, has become the focus of Malaysia's efforts at improving the quality of education.

The New Primary School Curriculum (NPSC) was formulated in response to a call by the Cabinet Committee on Education (1979) to address the problem of large numbers of children unable to acquire desirable basic skills.

In the NPSC, implemented in stages since 1983, the emphasis is on the acquisition of a desirable level of skills in the 3R's through direct experiences that lead towards the all round development of a child in the physical, emotional, spiritual as well as intellectual areas. New elements have been introduced into the curriculum in efforts to make it more relevant to current needs. Man and His Environment has replaced History and Geography. Also included are Moral Education and Commercial Practice.

Malaysia

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8 Maintaining a Balance in Curriculum Content

A major consideration guiding current curriculum development efforts has been the realization that the great majority of Botswana children would for the foreseeable future terminate their formal education at the end of year nine. This situation has resulted in the need to incorporate practical skills, though not vocational education, per se, into the curriculum to better prepare students for alternative forms of training after completing the basic education cycle.

The primary school curriculum comprises a core of six subjects:

English
Integrated Science
Mathematics
Setswana
Social Studies
Religious education

Agriculture and home economics have been introduced to provide a practical skills orientation to the world of work. Arts and crafts, physical education and music are offered as informal components of the primary school curriculum. The junior secondary school curriculum (years eight and nine) is also built around a core of six subjects:

Agriculture
English
Integrated Science
Mathematics
Setswana
Social Studies

In addition, home economics, technical studies, art and religious education are offered as options in the junior secondary curriculum.

Botswana

degree of specialisation' (see Box 8 for Botswana's resolution of this issue).

Mauritius. The Mauritius Institute of Education has, since 1981, undertaken the reform of the primary curriculum. A new framework for a national curriculum for primary and secondary education has been developed which serves 'the needs of all Mauritian children'. The core curriculum at primary level which includes two languages (English and French), Mathematics, and Environmental Studies, occupies approximately two-thirds of the teaching week. There are also non-examinable subjects - movement education, creative education and education in human values. The curriculum recognises the multicultural nature of Mauritian society through the teaching of Asian languages, in primary and secondary schools. The emphasis upon 'values education' raises problems of perspective and evaluation and also the difficult question of curriculum load. As the country paper says 'despite approaches towards developing integrated curricula within the broadbased core, the range of subjects is hardly reduced'.

(b)Relevance lies too at the core of reform and innovations: to local and national realities, to needs 'now' and needs 'later', to the world of work and to the world of study, to the lives of men and women, to those from cities and to those from rural backgrounds, to those able, fit and bright, and to those with special problems that require new solutions (Box 9 and Box 10). Concern for a relevant curriculum content has set in train a range of curriculum development activities in the majority of countries this survey covers.

Barbados. Activities have been initiated to increase relevance of core subjects with the introduction of specialist teachers in Language Arts, Science, etc; of new Industrial Enterprise Education, topics related to AIDS education and drug abuse in schools, and of efforts to promote interaction between education and productive work such as having pupils attached to business houses or offices.

Zimbabwe. The Curriculum Development Unit is currently reappraising content, 'which incorporates the academic, vocational/technical knowledge together with skill acquisition' with a view to increasing curricular relevance to the world of work.

Malawi. The New Curriculum is to be implemented in 1991 which will introduce life skills 'across the curriculum', with a greater emphasis on practicality and the affective domain. The Malawi Institute of Education, the country's centre for curriculum development, is responsible for these tasks.

Ghana. The Curriculum Research and Development Division of the Ministry of Education has been charged with the responsibility of updating the primary school curriculum. Parallel work is under way reforming the syllabuses of

9 Relevant Curriculum for Basic Education

What Namibia needs is a relevant curriculum for basic education tailored to the needs and realities of the local situation - a curriculum sufficiently broad based and duly balanced to provide a solid base for further education for some, while preparing the majority for a better life and a contribution to the development of their community and the country.

While curriculum research done both inside and outside the country prior to independence has yielded valuable insight on specific problems such as the language situation, the content of History syllabi, teacher training, vocational options and broad curricular aspects, virtually none of this has found its way into schools since all educational effort has been directed towards passing the final external examinations controlled from South Africa. This could and will now change. To lead and direct this change the government has decided to establish the National Institute of Education Development (NIED). This Institute will be the nerve-centre for curriculum design and development; for language research and development; for the design and co-ordination of pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes; and for the development of learning materials and education media. NIED is estimated to cost US$ 10 million and this investment is justified by the central role the Institute will play in revitalizing education in Namibia.

Namibia

10 Education Relevant to Local Government

mong the Maldive's major strategies and policies in education for quality are plans to make education more relevant to the local environment. These include strategies designed to:

(a) integrate into the curriculum Islam, Maldivian culture/traditions and environmental education

(b) introduce and integrate the concept of 'Education and work' into the structure, time-table and curriculum of the formal and non-formal system

(c) develop practical and work oriented knowledge and skills through programmes in grades 6 and 7.

Maldives

Primary Teachers' Colleges. In recognising that improvements in one area, i.e. school curriculum, require in tandem measures elsewhere, such as, at teachers' colleges, Ghana highlighted the importance of qualitative change in an integrated sense with the development of a 'package' of measures.

St Vincent and the Grenadines. To 'ensure relevance and a smooth implementation' of a revised curriculum, classroom teachers have been brought together in workshops...which have focussed on a number of key curriculum areas such as the teaching of reading and methods of working with pupils on an individual basis or in groups.

Sierra Leone. A UNDP/UNESCO project has undertaken the development of an innovative primary school curriculum with a work orientation which can be adopted to the needs of particular communities, particularly in the rural areas.

Nigeria, Barbados, Ghana, St Kitts and Nevis, Turks and Caicos. Concern for the welfare and education of children with special needs can be found in several country papers. The Turks and Caicos Islands paper pays particular attention to special education, a five year plan 'coming on stream' in September 1990 in which emphasis is to be on screening and diagnostic testing of pupils identified as requiring special attention (which as Nigeria points out include the minority of 'gifted children'), the design of appropriate curriculum materials, and the effective use of staff trained especially for these tasks.

The issue of developing appropriate strategies for teaching large classes is not one given prominence by the country papers though some reference is made to adjusting teacher-pupil ratios (often upwards) to maximise use of existing resources. Equally there is little evidence of curriculum development being seen as a school-based activity.

(c) The use of Distance Learning in the provision of basic education has proved to be an effective complement to teaching and learning especially where facilities and learning materials to support such endeavour are not available.

Tanzania points out that a downturn in the economy soon leads to 'key problems in unmanageable class sizes, lack of affordable radio sets and short supply of batteries'. Given these constraints they report favourably on the use of radio as a distance learning device pointing to enhanced academic and professional standing of teachers, mobilisation of adults to join literacy classes and the encouragement of 'group discussion among the learners and teachers' (see Box 11 for the experiences of the Falkland Islands).

Trinidad & Tobago. Close links have been established between the School Broadcasting Unit and the Curriculum Division for the delivery of aspects of the curriculum, with specialist educationists working alongside teachers.

11 Distance Learning

The Camp Education System, where one-to-one radio lessons are used to reach the pupil, is dependent on the consistency and hard work of the parent to ensure that the pupils are prepared for their radio schedule and complete the assignments before the next schedule. 'Link-up' programmes are on offer, bringing a variety of subjects, including science and music, to those remote locations as well as enabling the children to exchange ideas, stories, and work with others in similarly isolated areas. Parents (usually the mother) must organise their day to enable the children to take part in these programmes. If the family is in the middle of sheep shearing, it is hard to arrange for small children to apply themselves unless grandparents or friends can supervise the pupils. Records show that radio attendance is higher in the winter months when the outside work is done, hence a wider programme operates at this time.

The radio lessons are good publicity for the Department, due to the fact that all can listen to the dialogue, with conscientious students providing an excellent learning situation for future parents and young children. However, the amount of work involved in educating several children by two-metre radio, together with periodic travelling teacher visits, is enormous if a family becomes involved in everything the Department can offer.

Falkland Islands

12 The Book Supply Scheme

Prior to 1983, all primary school pupils provided their own textbooks. At the time it was estimated that only about 30 to 45 percent of the children had books. In 1983, the Book Supply Scheme was introduced on a pilot basis in the Thaba-Tseka District. In 1984, the scheme was extended to the rest of the country and by the end of that year more than 1,116,600 pupils' books in the three core subjects (English, Sesotho and Mathematics) had been supplied to about 297,000 primary school pupils in standards 1 to 7.

Only three books per pupil were supplied in the core subjects when the Book Supply Scheme was introduced country wide in 1984. As funds have become more available, the scheme is gradually being extended to other subjects. With effect from March 1989, the number of textbooks per pupil in the primary schools increased to 3.8 in both standards 1 and 2; 3.9 in standards 3; 4.3 in standard 4; 4.5 in standard 5; 5.8 in standard 6 and 6.2 in standard 7.

Lesotho

Zimbabwe. 3,500 of 4,504 primary schools receive radio broadcasts. Educational programmes on the Radio 4 channel also cover a wide range of subjects for the non-formal system e.g. primary health care, the role of women in the socio-economic order.

Malaysia. Three of the services provided by EDT (Educational Technology Division) are Educational Radio, Educational Television and Audio-Visual Aids. These are intended to complement teaching activities in schools and raise the standard of education especially in the rural areas through distance learning and the introduction of educational technology.

Learning Materials

The production of effective learning materials remains a priority for many ministries of education. Policies now seem to focus less on content (though some countries such as Zimbabwe are still concerned about inappropriate topics and images, particularly in books supplied from outside) and more on the production of low-cost materials which can be adapted. Improved use of local resources, adaptation of texts designed for elsewhere, the direction of external aid toward low-cost materials production, focus upon basic skills and community-orientated materials production, and the encouragement of teachers to provide more of their own resources, reflect therefore some efforts made by countries in the improvement of learning materials.

The Falkland Islands. Though generally following the British National Curriculum, some learning materials are being adapted for the country's socio-cultural context. 'Science and Social Studies teaching has been specifically written to be applied in radio lessons and farmers' kitchens!' Materials are also being adapted for use by itinerant or 'travelling teachers' visiting outlying communities.

Malta. All books are issued on loan and free-of-charge to all students. Locally produced materials are being used in conjunction with a choice of material produced abroad. More of the former and less of the latter is desired.

The Gambia. 400,000 primary textbooks and 100,000 middle school texts are being produced locally.

Lesotho. Since 1983 the Book Supply Scheme has attempted to make books in core subjects available to students in primary schools (Box 12).

Malaysia. Under a World Bank loan programme 45 million ringgit (£8.65 million) worth of non-book materials have been supplied to the 365 new resource centres. Specialist courses are being conducted for teachers in the use of low-cost teaching materials. Malaysia is one Commonwealth nation looking to Computer Aided Instruction (C.A.I.) to enhance quality. Proposals 'in the pipeline' include the supply of Personal Computers to all District Education

13 Learning Materials

Government has recognised the need for increased capacity in the production of books and other educational materials. The Kenneth Kaunda Foundation with the help of international donor agencies has been expanding its capacity of text book and exercise book production, particularly for basic schools. Local authors and publishers outside the framework of the Kenneth Kaunda Foundation are now given every encouragement to produce books for the school market. International publishing houses are encouraged to market their books in the Zambian schools through the established channels. The coupon scheme originally applied by UNESCO has now been used by the British Council to the advantage of our educational system. There is hope that in future common text books could be used in some selected subjects in the Region of Southern Africa. This would reduce book production costs tremendously.

Zambia

14 De-emphasising Rote Learning

The majority of the schools in the country have very inadequate library facilities and the students are heavily dependent on textbooks and notes dictated by teachers. The instructional modes adopted by the teachers encourage rote learning. In order to mitigate the consequences arising from the lack of library facilities, each teacher will be required to prepare a 'book of readings' on each subject he/she teaches. A book of readings, which is based on reference work undertaken by the teacher, should set out the relevant extracts (under each specified topic) from a number of books, so that the student is exposed to the thinking/viewpoints of a number of authors. Discussions based on books of readings will enrich the learning experiences of students, and passive rote learning will give way to active learning.

Sri Lanka

Resource Centres with concomitant training programmes.

Zimbabwe. Focus is upon the translation of curricular specifications into relevant textbooks. Books are scrutinised and adapted for use by both 'less qualified' and 'more resourceful teachers'. This 'mixed ability' approach to learning materials is a good example of using existing capacity more effectively.

Zambia. The Kenneth Kaunda Foundation with the help of international donor agencies has been expanding its capacity; local authors have been encouraged to write for the school market; and international publishers encouraged to market books through established channels (see Box 13).

Papua New Guinea. Experience here has taken the form of several textbook projects. The Community School textbook project initially aimed to produce three teachers' guides in Mathematics and Health, and 25 pupil textbooks amounting to a total of 466,500 copies of 28 titles. Some lessons were learned, PNG notes, and as a result the project surpassed its original targets for production, producing almost three times the number of books and titles identified at project appraisal. Even so, the constraints experienced meant implementation was almost three years behind schedule.

Uganda, through the third and fourth IDA educational projects, is equipping primary schools and teachers' colleges with textbooks, equipment and materials. In addition a pilot Book Project is being carried out in five districts, involving over 800,000 pupils. In this project every pupil is to pay 50% of the cost of textbooks - Government pays the remaining 50%.

Sri Lanka. In order to mitigate the consequences arising from the lack of library facilities, each teacher will be required to prepare a 'book of readings' on each subject he or she teaches (Box 14).

Sierra Leone: Concerned about the alarming shortage of textbooks and other essential learning materials and supplies in primary schools, the Government has established a Text Book Task Force project (with IDA and UK/ODA assistance) which selects, revises and procures textbooks and arranges for their storage and distribution to primary schools throughout the country.

Assessment

Country papers indicate that progress is underway on a number of fronts:

(a) To provide a better balance between modes of assessment e.g. between continuous and external assessment. 40% of work undertaken by Junior Secondary School pupils in Ghana will be continually assessed, the remaining 60% produced by external examination (the first 'mix' of this type planned for the end of the current academic year). Monsterrat has abolished its Common

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15 Continuous Assessment

In order to ensure a continuous education system from Grade 1 to Grade 9 the terminal examination at the end of the 7th and 9th years will be gradually phased out. Within the next five years, more schools will be encouraged to phase out the Junior Certificate Examination. This will be replaced by a system of continuous assessment and diagnostic testing, for which donor assistance has been obtained for the development of methodologies and teacher training.

For the Education Testing, Guidance and Psychological Services Section of the Ministry of Education to fulfill its task of assisting in continuous assessment and diagnostic testing, it will have to be strengthened. Its major tasks will include conducting diagnostic tests to detect learning strengths and weaknesses; administering a centralised continuous assessment system for the maintenance of uniform standards in the Country and identifying students' abilities, talents and inclinations. Specific activities will include internships for local personnel in institutions abroad to provide training for teachers and headmasters; long term training to Master's Degree Level in Guidance; and production of testing materials and development of guidance strategies.

Swaziland

Entrance examination and has introduced a system of profiles and Grade 6 examinations to replace it. Jamaica's National Assessment Programme is being developed along similar lines (See Box 15 for Swaziland's plans in this area).

(b) To move towards school-based criterion-referenced tests and evaluation which will complement existing summative norm-referenced examinations. In Malaysia, this is expected to create a number of new challenges particularly for teachers unfamiliar with issues of reliability, validity and standardisation. Moderation between schools will also require such measures as the establishment of item banks at district level and the training of support personnel.

(c) To broaden assessment exercises to reflect both cognitive and affective objectives of a new primary school curriculum. Malawi has reformed its P.S.L.C. examination to give more weight to skills and affective assessment; the Seychelles in its National Youth Service reforms are looking to an assessment of pupils' skills, attitudes and values and not just academic/cognitive areas.

(d) To bring assessment procedures in line with the culture and learning styles of particularly disadvantaged groups within society. New Zealand is witness to a movement developing educational systems 'in Maori, about Maori, and for Maori'. The assessment of spoken Maori for School Certificate has been adopted and many assessment procedures have been designed to accommodate a bilingual policy throughout the country.

(e) To provide a more standardised national assessment system. Statutory National Standard Assessment Tasks (S.A.Ts) are currently being developed in Britain and will be a requirement in the assessment of 14-year olds and a recommendation to teachers of 7 and 11-year olds who may wish to use them in 'support of their own assessment'. In Australia initial consideration has been given by Ministers to a national approach to assessment. A report to the Australian Education Council documents relevant State and Territory initiatives and outlines possible common approaches to the assessment of literacy and numeracy. Further work will be undertaken by the Australian Cooperative Assessment programme (ACEP), initially in literacy and numeracy and as resources permit, science.

(f) To strengthen the Ministerial agencies responsible for assessment. Barbados is actively considering the establishment of a Testing and Measurement Unit which will have among its tasks the development of formative assessments for both primary and secondary schools. Swaziland too is raising the profile of its Educational Testing, Guidance and Psychological Services to give greater prominence to diagnostic assessment.

In their discussions of assessment reforms, countries reveal awareness of well-known negative 'backwash' effects of examinations. These include teachers orienting classroom teaching-learning strategies toward examination requirements, an obstruction to innovations in methodology; in the use of school-based and indigenous learning materials; and in interdisciplinary class work such as project work and out-of-school activities. Such 'backwash' effects on the curriculum highlight the advantage of teachers becoming more skilled in the design and implementation of assessment mechanisms. What is not stated in the papers is the possibility of teachers influencing the quality of learning further down the system if they gain more influence in examination procedures working collaboratively with examination boards.

3 TEACHERS, TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Without a well-trained and committed teaching force, prospects for educational quality remain low. If curriculum issues revolve around the concern for balance and relevance, the question of teacher quality strikes at the centre of measures to enhance efficiency and equity. Understandably country papers accord high priority to enhancing the quality of teacher training at both pre and in-service levels and improved support professionally and personally for the teacher. Issues concerning the desired involvement of more women throughout the profession and the improvement of teacher morale feature strongly in many of the country papers. Policies and ways forward will be discussed under the broad headings of pre-service teacher education, in-service teacher training, and teacher support and improved conditions of service.

Pre-Service Teacher Education

(a) Policy at this level is everywhere directed to producing well-trained (in terms of subject knowledge, teaching skills, and appropriate professional attitudes) and highly motivated teachers whose training prepares them adequately for life in the classroom. A problem in the past has been the divorce between what is taught at teachers' college level (often overly academic and unrelated to practice) and what teachers are expected to do in the classroom. Focus now in a number of countries is on improving the calibre of those entering teachers' college by raising entry requirements (Ghana) and their suitability through appropriate selection processes (Australia) ; more efficiency in the utilisation of teacher education resources (The Gambia); and policies to enhance the training of trainers (Malawi), something long overdue and pivotal to improvements in the performance of college graduates. In Britain the recent Education Reform Act (1988) requires that all college lecturers involved in pre-service teacher education gain significant 'recent and relevant' experience of life in the classroom. One country paper points to the importance of securing improved teacher-student relationship at teachers' college (Guyana - The Cyril Potter College of Education). Country studies identify both quantitative as well as qualitative concerns.

> Antigua and Barbuda has introduced new recruitment policies in order to ensure that primary school teachers possess an adequate knowledge base. Only those applicants would be considered who have a minimum of four Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) general proficiency subjects at grade I and/or II, including English 'A':

16 Particular Needs of Girls

The participation of girls in primary education is an aspect which the government has invested a great deal of attention. Inspite of the fact that about 52 per cent of the population is female, there are fewer girls than boys in the system. This is a result of more girls than boys dropping out during the first seven years of primary school. Dropping out is a serious problem which affects both sexes in Malawi. But the problem is even more serious for girls. For example, in 1987/88, the drop out rate among first time enrollees for the first four years of primary was as high as 73 per cent in some parts of the country. Girls' drop out is higher in the rural areas where predominantly male classes in standard seven and eight are seen.

Malawi

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17 Improving Local Teacher Supply

The following measures are being taken to improve the localization process, to attract more people to the teaching profession, and to improve the quality of teachers.

i A joint programme with the University of Sussex and the School of Education of the Seychelles Polytechnic for batches of 25 students to complete a BEd course after following part of it in the School of Education in Seychelles.

ii A similar programme is being negotiated for students to follow a BEd course in Australia.

iii Scholarships are offered in areas of disciplines where there is a shortage of teachers to those who get passes in the upper secondary (Cambridge Advanced Level) examination.

iv A committee is examining a new salary structure with attractive increment and a gratuity to encourage people to stay in the service.

v Steps are being taken towards the formation of a professional association for teachers. This is to improve the professional advancement of teachers, give them a voice in matters of educational policy etc.

vi Opportunities are being provided for experts from other countries and organisations to work with teachers to familiarise them with new developments in the field of education.

vii Upgrading courses for unqualified teachers are organised, with a tutor for a batch of about seven, to improve the academic level in different subjects, to improve the quality of their teaching and to enhance their salaries.....

Seychelles

The Gambia, through the second IDA Education Sector Project, seeks improvements at the School of Education, Gambia College, which will:

i increase the number of pre-service trainees taking the 2-year Primary Teachers' Certificate Course and

ii up-grade the 1,200 unqualified serving teachers (at a rate of 200 per year) through a school-based programme leading to a Basic Teachers' Certificate.

Malawi has plans to double residential places for primary teacher trainees (up to 3,350); to improve efficiency by utilising facilities at teacher colleges (by slightly increasing capacity too); and to improve the quality of teacher trainers, through a policy focussing on curriculum, methodology and qualifications of staff.

Guyana is tackling the issue on a number of fronts which include the reorganisation of modes of training at the pre-service institutions; training of teacher educators through local and overseas programmes; the introduction of special programmes for teachers in the hinterland regions; and the development of systematic on-going training programmes for practising teachers.

(b) The policy of recruiting and retaining more women teachers is given attention by a number of countries.

The Gambia is implementing measures to raise the total number of women teachers (at present 809 women of a total of 2,420 teachers). It will also introduce measures designed to promote 'a greater representation of women in Science, Mathematics and technical subjects in order to promote positive role models in those traditionally male dominated subjects.

Malawi (Box 16) and Swaziland, concerned about the number of girls, particularly in rural areas who drop out of schooling, are continuing to support adult literacy programmes in rural areas (which will benefit girls who have dropped out earlier for financial reasons) and the provision of pre-school education for children aged 3-5 years, the latter then having a 'knock-on' effect in encouraging female teachers who are mothers to return to the profession. Nigeria too has committed considerable effort to improving the position of women in society (see Section 5 Education and the Community).

(c) The question of localisation of the teaching force is one the Seychelles government is tackling. Batches of 25 students are currently being trained in Britain and at home as part of a joint B.Ed degree programme. This and a similar programme being negotiated with the Australian authorities will help The Seychelles reduce its reliance on the employment of expatriate staff. Attention is also directed to issues of more attractive salary structures as well as upgrading academic and professional training (see Box 17).

18 Innovative Approaches to Teacher Education Programmes

Drastic policy changes in primary education during the mid 70s resulted in expanded enrolment of both pupils and primary level teacher trainees. As the conventional teacher training plan could not meet the demand, other strategies were adopted which included the following:-

- re-employment of retired teachers on contract basis;
- shortening of the duration of existing teacher training programmes to a minimum of one year in order to accelerate teacher output from the teachers colleges;
- lowering of basic entry requirements for Grade 'A' teacher training;
- introduction of village based teacher training programme Distance Teacher Training Approach (DTTA).

The most significant among these innovations for teacher preparation has been the DTTA which between 1972 - 1984 had enlisted 37,998 new grade C teacher trainees at a substantially lower cost. DTTA used a variety of training methods including:-

- face to face instruction
- correspondence lessons
- practical teaching
- training through radio broadcasts
- audio cassette programmes
- six weeks residential training at the end of the course.

The planning and implementation of the DTT programme was done and supervised by the Ministry's head office. The plan involved the Ministry

- issuing guidelines to regional offices on who and how to recruit trainees;
- training teacher trainers at zonal levels;
- preparing plans on how to carry out workshops/seminars for teacher trainees;
- establishing of a task force to monitor the implementation of the DDTA at local level.

Tanzania

(d) Some recent innovative structures tend to blur traditional distinctions between pre-service and in-service training as in Britain's new programmes of initial teacher training. There are licensed teacher and articled teacher routes. The licensed teacher route places greater emphasis on school-based training and applies to unqualified persons over 26 years old with at least 2 years of higher education who wish to train to teach on-the-job. The second new route, for articled teachers, allows graduates to follow a mainly school-based training under the supervision of a training institution. Montserrat in similar vein has re-introduced school-based teacher training.

(e) Distance teaching is being viewed by some countries as a cost-effective means of improving the professional development of teachers.

> Guyana intends to extend the scope of its activities in this field by introducing programmes to up-grade the content and skills of unqualified teachers in the hinterland and riverine locations. Printed materials sent by post and radio and audio cassettes will be developed to further these aims.
>
> Tanzania presents evidence of a Distance Teacher Training Approach (DTTA) which, based at village level, has made significant progress in production of low cost entrants to the teaching profession (see Box 18).

In-Service Training

In-service teacher training is recognised by many countries as an effective and quick way of improving the quality of content and methodology in schools.

> Mauritius is giving priority to two groups. First the experienced primary school teachers who need re-acquainting with curricular initiatives will take a year's part-time course (affecting about 10% of the teaching force). Secondly, more than 25% of teachers in the secondary sector, who received no professional training, will receive a major programme of upgrading.
>
> Trinidad and Tobago give priority to in-service teacher education (pre-service being discontinued in the late 1960's because of the high percentage of trained teachers) with two-year college-based courses, intensive short courses to up-grade teachers, on an on-going basis, and support for the publication of educational journals and the establishment of a Learning Resource Centre. The government, through a general rationalisation of the teacher training service intend developing programmes in 'target' subjects such as Reading and Mathematics which will be organised during the long vacation.
>
> Pakistan provides evidence of a number of inter-related activities at different levels in which effective teaching-

19 Training and Retraining of Teachers

Many efforts have been made for proper education and training of teachers. Education as a subject has been introduced in the curriculum at matriculation, intermediate and degree levels of education. The prospective teachers offer this subject at successive levels of their education starting from matriculation. Special crash programmes are organised by the Federal Ministry of Education for master trainers who in turn organise similar training programmes for working school teachers at provincial levels.

One of the major components of various foreign-aided projects is the training and re-training of grass-root teachers in modern and better teaching techniques. The World Bank PEDEP Project has provided special inputs for 3 level training: A-level for master trainers at federal level, B-level for learning co-ordinators and supervisors who in turn organise C-level training of grass root working school teachers.

Pakistan

20 In-Service Training

Courses on Continuous Assessment have also been given to all Heads and teachers of basic education. Also, before the implementation of the educational reforms, teachers for the Junior Secondary Schools were given orientation courses on the new syllabuses. After this initial exposure, an in-depth subject In-Service course for teachers has been programmed. In this direction, Courses for Technical Skills, Science and Mathematics teachers have been organised. Courses in the other subject areas are to follow.

It is envisaged that after the nationally organised In-Service Courses, a sufficient number of suitable trainers would have been identified and trained in all the subject areas. These trainers would be used in the In-Service Courses for teachers to be organised at the circuit level. The cascade method has been adopted in our training courses.

Ghana

learning processes are seen as the 'king pin' to quality education. Box 19 notes their efforts to improve teacher education at both in-service and pre-service level. In their case the cascade approach to teacher training has proved most effective, particularly when measured against improved pupil achievement. The same approach is also being followed by Ghana (Box 20).

Canada. A new Master's of Education has recently been implemented, making extensive use of distance education techniques and technologies, including teleconferencing, to focus on the specific interest and needs of teachers in rural and northern schools.

Botswana. In response to the need for more trained teacher educators and better qualified primary school teachers, the University of Botswana has instituted two new programmes. The first is a B.Ed (primary) degree for staffing primary teacher training colleges and the second a two-year diploma programme whose graduates return to primary schools.

Grenada illustrates models that juggle with part-time and full-time structures (see Box 21). The Grenada country paper reflects on the difficulties such arrangements pose. First, it is very difficult to find suitably qualified secondary school graduates to replace teachers seconded for full-time training which means that 'under-qualified and unsuitable candidates generally, get into the classrooms'. Secondly, it is difficult to hold on to teachers who, though bonded for three years, often leave teaching after graduation. Problems of motivation, teachers working on in-service assignments whilst in class, schools depleted of staff on Fridays, and absenteeism are challenges thrown up by well-intentioned efforts at qualitative improvement.

Teacher Support and Improved Conditions of Service

Country papers report a number of initiatives designed to provide professional support for the serving teacher.

(a) Several countries have set up resource centres (Belize, The Gambia, Tanzania) where teachers can share and exchange ideas, experiences, innovative teaching methods, information and resources. Botswana's network of Education Centres provide in-service professional support to primary and secondary teachers as well as non-formal education officers, fanning out across the country to reach all regions and localities (Box 22). Trinidad & Tobago intend establishing a Teacher Development Learning Resource Centre which will focus on the production of materials supportive of the curriculum and the upgrading of teaching skills. The Bahamas has established a hearing Resources Unit which, among other activities, helps teachers to develop materials designed specifically to address the needs of their students.

(b) The use of peripatetic resource teachers has been initiated by Bermuda to strengthen the work of the classroom teacher.

21 Part-time and full-time In-service Structures

There are two types of training offered to teachers. First, there is a two-year In-College Teacher Training Programme at the Department of Teacher Education, Grenada National College. Fifty primary school teachers are recruited each year for training, and they are replaced in the schools by young secondary school graduates.

The second type of training primary school teachers receive is an In-service type. Young recruits in teaching automatically get into a two-year In-service Training programme organized by the Teacher Education Department of the Grenada National College. Lectures are held in three different centres, simultaneously, every other Friday and clinical supervision goes on during the other days of the week.

Grenada

22 The Education Centre Network

The Education Centre Network represents a major commitment by the Government to bring inservice education opportunities within easy reach of all teachers in Botswana. The network began in the 1970s with five small centres located in major villages. Because of the demonstrated value of these early operations, it was decided to extend the network nationally and to provide much more extensive facilities.

With donor assistance, nine new Education Centres, strategically located across the country, are being constructed. Each Centre provides hostel accommodations for 35, two classrooms, a library and a materials development room. Office space is provided for primary, secondary and non-formal education officers. It is planned that the older Education Centres will be upgraded to the level of the new facilities during the seventh National Development Plan period (1991-1996).

Some Centres are beginning to take on unique roles in addition to more generalised responsibilities. Examples of this are environmental education, Breakthrough/project method, media development and computer education. Programming for the centres is done locally with the intent that each one will be as responsive as possible to local and regional needs while, at the same time, attending to national inservice education goals.

Botswana

> 'A number of teachers who have demonstrated a sound knowledge of their subject and effectiveness in the classroom have been seconded to the Ministry to function as resource teachers providing guidance to their colleagues in the classroom in all those areas affecting their performance. These teachers conduct model lessons for their colleagues, providing guidance on a one-to-one basis and conduct workshops in response to identified needs. If relevance, efficiency and balance are important in determining quality no doubt also is the 'human factor': inspiration, motivation and creativity.'

(c) To cope with the problems of teaching children with learning difficulties, Tonga has trained a special group of teachers who have become known as LINK teachers. The Ministry has implemented a programme of identifying key teachers in every school and training such a teacher to be able to identify not only children with, but also in the early years, children with potential learning difficulties; to assist him/her to understand the reasons for such learning difficulties and the learning strategies required to overcome these problems; and to improve his/her capabilities for assisting such children to learn meaningfully and optimally within the formal school system.

(d) Improved supervisory teams to assess and advise teachers and measures to reward (and therefore retain) effective, long-serving teachers are given priority in some countries. In Zimbabwe for instance such activities will be carried out by an improved supervisory team within the system (currently one supervisor to 155 teachers). Country experiences are discussed in the next section (4) under the heading 'Improved Supervision and Advisory Services'.

(e) The numerous provincial teachers' associations are actively involved in many activities designed to support their members professionally and financially, to increase the role teachers play in policy and program development, to increase their ability to cope with the demands of their profession and to provide professional development. All associations are active in presenting in-service, with many emphasizing the development of leadership skills, which may be useful to those pursuing administrative courses for positions of added responsibility. All provide counselling and mediation and legal services, involvement in superannuation concerns, public information, and pre-retirement planning. In addition, they are encouraging teacher involvement at all phases of curriculum development and implementation.

(f) The question of policies and ways forward concerned with improved teacher morale is one recognised by many Commonwealth governments.

> Antigua and Barbuda have undertaken changes to enhance quality in schools. In 1987 the government reclassified the Teaching Service with a view to basing promotion more on qualification than on length of service. Heads of primary schools, Education officers and specialist supervisors are

encouraged to upgrade their academic qualifications to degree level while the feasibility of posting graduate teachers to primary schools is a policy being severely considered.

Australia rewards good teaching with the introduction of an Advanced Skills Teacher category designed to keep the best teachers in the classroom rather than promoting them into administrative positions. These 'super teachers' will have a key role to play in promoting excellence of teaching, through their examples in classroom work, their involvement in curriculum development, and their education of the next generation of teachers through supervision of trainees.

Zimbabwe has recently established the post of Senior Teacher, granting mortgage guarantees, and low interest motor vehicle loans as initiatives aimed at raising the morale and prestige of the good teacher.

Malawi teachers enjoy a relatively high status within the country. This, it is suggested, is because, unlike in most countries, teachers are civil servants and 'thus receive all the benefits received by other civil servants' which in reality means that teachers and lawyers receive salaries based on the same scale, similar incentives, which include, 'a non-contributory pension which will enable him to retire at the age of 50'.

Swaziland 'remains committed to its on-going programme of providing houses for teachers', the Seychelles to policies encouraging the formation of a professional association for teachers, the establishment of a committee to review teachers' salaries, and welfare support services. Guyana too has established a Ministerial Teachers' Welfare Desk and a recently signed 'Grievance and Dispute Agreement' negotiated by the Ministry of Education and the Teachers' Union.

Cyprus has pursued several measures during the past four years to 'raise and maintain teacher morale', the most outstanding of which are the reduction of class contact periods, thus giving teachers time for preparation, independent study, and the checking of pupils' written work; the abolition of all discriminating elements between men and women teachers; allowances to disadvantaged positions: teachers working in one-teacher and two-teacher schools to be paid a special allowance; and new regulations on placement, retention and transfer worked out between the Ministry of Education and the Teachers' Unions.

Jamaica, in its efforts to raise morale offers amongst other things, 'one year's study leave with full pay after teachers have served two years of a permanent contract, interest-free car loans, car upkeep allowances, and generous housing schemes.

These examples illustrate well the relationship between resourcing and teacher morale in countries' efforts to provide a context of qualitative improvements in teaching.

4 MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING

Three broad policy areas can be identified from the country papers:

(a) those concerned with improved management at ministry, district, and school levels

(b) those concerned with the implementation of devolved authority and decision-making (and financial control) to all localities and

(c) those concerned with improvement in supervision and inspection services.

More efficient management, administration and planning

Good recruitment and adequate training of managers are fundamental to the quality of education. Although this has been recognised by almost every international education conference in the past decade, the resultant action has everywhere been disappointing. Research* indicates that two problems predominate:

(i) because of quantitative pressures within and upon systems, education officers, supervisors and inspectors are still appointed to undertake crucial roles with no training at the outset and little, if any, training on the job.

(ii) training courses that are undertaken tend to focus almost exclusively on management as a set of skills and techniques in themselves divorced from their most important goal, that of achieving desired changes in the behaviour of learners.

The root cause seems to lie in the structure and staffing of the institutions that train the managers. Until these can be persuaded to take a wider view of management and of quality, the gap between the theoretical, book-oriented manager and the more dynamic, person-oriented model will remain unbridged.

(a) Among other countries, Guyana and Malawi recognise that policy must address the issue of efficient management. The former aim to produce a National Project Register which will establish 'project profiles' in four policy areas: equality of access, management, instructional programmes and Human Resource Development (i.e. teacher 'growth'). Costs, time frames, personnel, equipment, and outcomes will be articulated along with regional needs, all seen as information that will increase efficiency and better decision-making.

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*Hawes, Hugh & Stephens, David op cit 1990

23 Improving Management through Consultation

The concept of Muzakarah (consultation) is the basic procedure practised in departmental and inter-departmental administration. Policy approved at the ministerial level will be discussed at the departmental level before it is passed on to heads of schools for implementation. On the other hand, headmasters (primary) and principals (secondary) will provide feedback to the Department of Schools as to whether a policy is deemed suitable or otherwise. Similarly, headmasters and principals normally refer to the Department of Schools before any fundamental decision is taken that may affect their schools. Should there be any problem, the Head will highlight the difficulties and suggest a possible alternative for the project to be implemented successfully. With this form of administrative procedure (Muzakarah), many problems are solved and the probability of success for each project is fairly high.

Brunei Darussalam

24 In-service Education Programme for Headteachers

In 1987, Botswana launched a major in-service education programme aimed toward strengthening the leadership in the primary schools. The first two-year cycle involved all headteachers (approximately 575) in four workshops of one-week duration. The content of the workshops, which drew heavily from periodic needs assessments, was balanced between administrative skills development and curriculum/instructional concerns. An important feature of these workshops was the "homework" required of each headteacher between workshops. As a part of this responsibility, the headteachers were expected to share their own Workshop experience with their respective staff.

Botswana

(b) With an eye on the need for better communication within and among divisions and departments, several countries have reorganised their structures and introduced fresh channels of communication (see Box 23 for Brunei Darussalam's consultation approach). Grenada for instance has recently reorganised its Ministry of Education into four divisions. These are Schools, Curriculum and Culture, Administration, and Policy and Planning which hold regular fortnightly meetings 'to review work programmes and prepare plans for the future'. In Guyana the Minister has regular monthly meetings with Heads of Departments.

(c) An awareness of the need for management training for professional officers at several levels marks strategies undertaken by Trinidad & Tobago, Tanzania, Tonga, Malta, Malaysia and Guyana. Many countries have combined this with structural changes.

> Trinidad & Tobago combines a 'top down' and 'bottom up' approach to planning and implementing change. Those at the 'top': thirteen Ministerial divisions responsible for a specific area of educational administration work in close collaboration with 'stake holders' at the 'bottom' - the decentralised regional districts.
>
> Tanzania indicates a similar combined approach in a number of efforts made to improve the training of management personnel at district and regional levels which include regional and district education officers, heads of primary schools, and Supplies and Logistics Officers.
>
> Tonga has implemented the Pacific Educational Management Project, funded by UNESCO/UNDP, to assist head teachers to manage primary schools more effectively. The project comprises eight broad areas: planning and management, multi-class teaching, pupils' progressive assessment, running a school library, staff development, pupils' welfare, curriculum management, and resource management.
>
> Malta has made improvements in the management of education centrally revealing changes at the top. This has been achieved in two phases: one - the co-ordination and mutual support between departments and, two, the restructuring, where necessary, of departments. Initiatives taken include the running by the Faculty of Education, of courses leading to a Diploma in Educational Management and Administration. Masters Degrees in Education are also now offered (see Box 24 for measures taken in Botswana to strengthen administrative and professional leadership in primary schools).
>
> Changes having an effect on stake holders 'at the bottom' have been introduced by Malaysia in the provision of courses in educational leadership (in this case by the National Institute of Educational

25 **Management Training for Teachers**

For those teachers who do not have the basic qualifications for admission to the Certificate Course in Educational Management and Administration offered by the Faculty of Education, University of the West Indies, the Teachers' Training College has arranged workshops in Educational Management with the following objectives:

1. To provide opportunities for experienced teachers who have no formal management training, to examine some basic management concepts and principles in a practical context.
2. To encourage teachers to seek solutions to existing management problems in their schools.
3. To provide a forum for discussion of current management concerns.
4. To provide teachers with strategies for the identification and resolution of school related problems.

These workshops are aimed at attracting experienced teachers in the system, who by nature of their long service, are constantly required to perform management roles in schools. These persons possess no significant wealth of professional training in educational management behaviour in a positive and creative context. Workshops such as the one outlined would sensitise participants to features of effective management behaviour and encourage them to perform management roles in self-actualising, creative and supportive ways.

Barbados

Management). In 1987 for example about 7,450 Malaysian headmasters and teachers underwent some form of management training at the Institute. Intervention at school level with the training of headteachers in leadership roles appears one route for the implementation of policies aimed at improving management of basic education provision. Dominica is to focus on improving the management abilities of its school principals while Box 25 gives information on training for teachers in Barbados.

Guyana is tackling the issue of effective management at the top:

- an IDB Project in technical co-operation to strengthen the Ministry's management skills in information storage and retrieval, supervision, performance evaluation, maintenance and library service

- a project in School Mappping to provide the Ministry with a diagnosis of the education system i.e. data on schools, teachers, school age population etc, using data to rationalise the system.

(d) The status of women receives special attention in Canada where a 1990 report 'Women and Men in Education: A National Survey of Gender Distribution in School systems' found that women are not occupying administrative positions leaving senior administrative positions to men in numbers far out of proportion to their representation in the school system. Some departments of education have employment equity policies and programmes in place with the strongest commitment from Ontario where they plan to fill 50% of supervisory positions with women by the year 2000.

Devolution and Decentralisation of Management

(a) A policy of sharing of responsibilities between centre and locality for the management, planning and administration of education is viewed by some Commonwealth countries as a viable way forward. Zimbabwe's point that the school is the starting point in the push towards 'effective management, supervision and control of the human as well as material resources' is shared by other countries.

Malawi's policy takes on board the thorny issue of decentralisation with some responsibilities identified for regional and district level. Functions such as the posting and transfer of teachers, and disciplinary concerns are viewed as suitable for decentralised control. Such a move also raises questions of autonomy in decision-making.
Britain's recent Education Reform Act (1988) has substantially shifted policy in this area. 'Local Management of Schools' (LMS) intends 'to secure the maximum delegation of financial and managerial responsibilities to school level, governing bodies and headteachers' (Box 26).

26 Management of the Education System: Increased Local Responsibility

The Education Reform Act of 1988 substantially altered the disposition of responsibilities for the management of the education system. The role of central and local authorities as regulators and monitors was enhanced through the establishment of a national curriculum framework and the means of assessing both students and schools. The role of the schools themselves as local or site managers of the actual learning experiences was significantly increased through the new policy, 'Local Management of Schools' (LMS), introduced in England and Wales on 1 April 1990. Each LEA was required before that date to design a scheme for local management which met national guidelines and to have it approved by the Secretary of State. The great majority of LEAs now have statutory LMS schemes in operation.

The underlying principle for these schemes of local management is to secure the maximum delegation of financial and managerial responsibilities to school level - to governing bodies (GBs) and headteachers. Thus, within the local and national framework established through LMS schemes and statutory duties, the GB will control the running of the school with its delegated budget. It will be for the GB, together with the headteacher, to develop and implement a School Plan within the general conditions and requirements of the LEA's scheme. Local management will therefore give schools power to deploy their resources to match their responsibilities, to respond to local needs, and to manage and market themselves with greater vigour and efficiency. Governors and teachers will be expected to use school development plans as management tools, defining aims and objectives and monitoring achievement.

Britain

27 Management and Teacher Effectiveness

In public education today, especially in large school systems, there is a trend to decentralize decision-making, giving more authority to the schools. "School Based Management" permits the local school administration, within a framework of legislation, policies and priorities determined by the central authority, to establish priorities and apply funds with minimal restrictions. Simply put, it embodies the concept that decisions should be made at the lowest possible level in organizations, as close as possible to those who will be most affected by those decisions, i.e. instructional decisions should be made by teachers, and schoolwide decisions by principals. Reasons for this include attempts to enhance the local school staff's sense of professional accountability, a desire to have schools be more responsive to local expectations and values, and an attempt to reduce the public impressions of school boards as unwieldy bureaucracies.

Canada

(b) Implementation strategies put in place by several countries emphasise devolution and decentralisation management strategies brought about by recent reforms.

> New Zealand - with its key policy principle that 'employer responsibilities and management will be devolved to the individual institution level' (top administrative staff being placed on individual contracts) - has established 'new roles and responsibilities' for school governors, principals (as 'manager and chief professional') and teachers.
>
> Ghana has recently decentralised administration but leaving educational planning, budgeting and financial control still managed centrally, with 110 administrative districts having Directors of Education generally responsible for 'all activities in the educational districts under them'. Ghana believes that decentralisation to district level will mean that administrators will be 'more familiar with the problems in the schools'.
>
> Zimbabwe sees the headteacher as the kingpin, the frontline manager, who will carry the call for quality into classrooms and adult education centres. Hence 'the administrative structure of the schools reflects not only leadership styles, as it also correlates with what actually happens in the classroom, in terms of learning needs..'

School-based management (see Box 27) appears an exciting way forward in the desire for governments to implement their policies of educational quality in the classroom. It seems logical, therefore, that the move towards decentralisation of management and administration will lead to educationists and politicians in the future examining the role of the class teacher as a 'manager of learning, particularly in situations of large classes with scarce resources'.

Improved Supervision and Advisory Services

(a) The supervision and monitoring of measures to improve basic education does not feature strongly in country papers (though St Lucia devotes all of its contribution to this issue). However a number of ways forward were identified by the country papers.

> Guyana indicates that it is to be a major objective of the Ministry over the next five years with training programmes for staff and the re-establishment of an Inspectorate not only to monitor but also to advise teachers on problems identified.
>
> Uganda announces that the National Institute of Teacher Education has since 1987 offered supervision as a major component of its Bachelor of Education degree, a course specifically designed for teachers intending to become lecturers and tutors in teachers colleges and

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28 Supervising and Monitoring School Activities

On the basis of the research findings a set of 12 variables (characteristics) were selected to guide the school performance review activities. Concern was also given to characteristics that could be directly influenced by the school. These characteristics were:

1. the school's philosophy and goals;
2. coordination of instruction;
3. staff relations and staff welfare;
4. staff development efforts;
5. induction of new staff;
6. school climate, student discipline and welfare;
7. homework policy;
8. student handwriting:
9. coordination with feeder school(s);
10. record keeping;
11. school's effort at enhancing physical plant;
12. community relations.

It was hoped that performance review exercises would have a two-fold effect. One the one hand, it was expected that the characteristics chosen would serve as a basis for assessing the quality of schooling provided but of greater significance, however, was the expectation that a discussion of these variables would provide a clear signal for action in these areas.

St. Lucia

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29 Training for Principals In Effective Supervision

A teacher performance appraisal instrument has been in place in schools for a number of years. The instrument focuses on those behaviours by teachers which have been shown by research to effect student learning.

More recently a four year professional development programme for principals has been initiated. Its purpose is the improvement of the skills of principals in the supervision of instruction. The participants in the first year of the programme were volunteer principals. The programme is being conducted by a firm of Canadian consultants in co-ordination with the Department of Education officers.

One of the outcomes of the programme is the development of a manual setting out the procedures for effective supervision. A group of volunteer teachers from the schools of participating principals has been involved in the practical application of skills identified and techniques developed during the training sessions and have contributed to the writing of the manual. It is anticipated that this collaborative process will lead to improved supervision of instruction and that supervision will be accepted more readily by teachers as a result of their involvement in the development of the process. It is planned that other principals will join the professional development programme in the next academic year.

Bermuda

inspectors of schools.

The British paper, concerned almost solely with its national curriculum proposals, indicates that Local

Educational Authorities will now have to 're-define their organisation and procedures to ensure that their work is based on systematic evaluation of the performance of schools, increasingly by first-hand observation of teaching and learning'. The Local Educational Authorities will take on a more strategic role, assisting and ensuring that 'local management is successful in delivering better education. Local Management of School (LMS) will be subject to national evaluation and review, in particular by Her Majesty's Inspectors, who will inspect the impact of the reforms on the quality of classroom experience'.
St. Lucia devotes a significant proportion of its paper to detailing its efforts at grappling 'with the seemingly straightforward but difficult problem of supervising and monitoring the education system for the purposes of improving quality'. Utilising research findings - interestingly one of the few countries to mention doing so - the Ministry indicate '12 variables (characteristics) selected to guide school performance review activities' (see Box 28). St. Lucia hopes that performance review exercises will serve two purposes: as a basis for assessing the quality of schooling provided and secondly as important discussion points which in turn would 'provide a clear signal for action in these areas' (see Box 29 for Bermuda's strategies in this area).

5 EDUCATION AND THE COMMUNITY

The call for education to meet 'the real' problems and preoccupations of the community ring down through the decades through declarations made at meetings such as the African Ministers of Education meeting in Lagos in 1972 and the Harare Conference in 1982. The Bunumbu Project in Sierra Leone, the Namutamba experiments in Uganda, and projects Impact and Pamong in the Philippines and Indonesia are all examples of efforts to enhance quality through initiatives to make basic education more meaningful, relevant and accountable to those it serves.

(a) Policy statements highlighted by country contributions reveal that governments set great store by programmes of basic education that will, to quote Barbados, 'provide a varied programme of education that is available to all citizens, of all ages, at all levels'. The concept of continuing education or lifelong education is used to bridge the gap between formal and informal, and child-adult learning. The particular needs of women and girls, and the link between in-school and out-of-school education can be found in country case documents. Policies can be divided into two groups; those that intend to make what is learned in-school more relevant to community life (Seychelles, Guyana, Uganda) and those aimed at taking education, often of a non-formal kind, out and to the Community. Programmes of the latter kind relate

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30 Area-Intensive Education Project for Human Resource Development (AIEP)-

Community support to and participation in school improvement programmes are a key strategy in raising educational quality. An innovative project (AIEP) has ben initiated in 500 villages in India. The project aims to integrate early childhood care and education, primary education, non-formal education and adult learning concerns in the community as well as socio-economic development inputs offered by various agencies in the area.

Participatory planning and management of educational programmes, intersectoral co-ordination and people's participation are the key supportive strategies. The Village Co-ordination Committees (VCC) play a key role and ensure active community participation.

India

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31 School - Community Links

MINDSACROSS

This is a unique "school-community integrated system for Living Literacy" project. It is a Research Development Project supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and sponsored by the Institute of Teacher Education, Uganda.

MINDSACROSS was launched in September 1988, and is based in four Primary Schools.

The project has two main objectives, namely:

(i) To encourage the total school consisting of management, teachers and pupils to practice and consolidate pupils developing skills in reading, drawing and writing and

(ii) To build confidence among school pupils as innovators of new ideas and as capable and permanent communicators with themselves, their peers and other audiences.

SOME OUTCOMES

MINDSACROSS children have participated actively in drawing, writing, discussing and exchanging texts. They have displayed their works and compiled scrap books.

Several titles (on a wide range of subjects) of this work have been printed and published. Several manuscripts remain unpublished.

Funds are being solicited to print and publish the numerous manuscripts written by children. Indeed more substantial funds will be required to expand MINDSACROSS to nationwide status.

Uganda

specifically to literacy, the education of women and those, like the child-to-child initiatives established in Uganda, to areas of health and family welfare. Commonwealth countries also look to activities strengthening the links between school and community either through parent-teacher associations (Mauritius) or school-community committees (Swaziland).

(b) Bringing together the in-school and out-of-school activities is one strategy (see Box 30) used to relate what is learned in school to life in the community. In some cases schools short of resources orientate in-school learning in such a way that it looks out towards the real world of work and the community.

> The Seychelles, long committed to education 'bringing about the transformation into the envisaged socialist society', has developed through its National Youth Service (NYS) post-primary learning that is both academic and community orientated. Students at the NYS villages 'learn supplementary skills and knowledge and ... develop attitudes and values' which can be considered out-of-school activity. These activities include Cookery, Laundrying, Hygiene, holding debates, home gardening, sports and various extra-curricular activities such as drama, music etc. This out-of-school education is complementary to the in-school education and these two jointly round off Basic Education for life in Seychelles.
>
> Tanzania continues to make use of community facilities in the implementation of school curriculum. Coursework 'often involves student visits to various places of interest such as the market and other public service centres, scenic places including game sanctuaries and parks, industries, hospitals etc...'. The paper adds that, 'in certain cases, a school may not have adequate playgrounds for physical education and this may necessitate the use of nearest community facilities'.
>
> Uganda's Child-to-Child programme in which skills, knowledge and attitudes acquired in school are transmitted by children to peers and parents 'out of school' is complemented by the innovative Mindsacross project (see Box 31). A successful feature seems to be their efforts to work with rather than against existing cultural norms (Box 32).

(c) Basic education programmes designed to reach out to particular groups include those which focus on literacy, income-generating or work skills, the particular needs of women and children, health, agriculture etc. and sometimes include second-chance programmes for those who had missed earlier opportunities during formal schooling. Strategies in place include attempts to optimise existing physical capacity by utilising school and community facilities, with the role of non-governmental organisations highlighted.

> The Jamaican Movement for the Advancement of Literacy (JAMAL) in the 17 years of its existence has reduced the illiteracy rate from 50% to 18% (1987).

32 School Health Education Project (SHEP)

This presents an innovative development initiative in line with making the formal educational processes more relevant and responsive to national development goals and community welfare. The project mobilises the creativity of the country's educationists and potential of the educational infrastructrure in developing a sustainable and cost effective educational experience designed to improve the health consciousness of the local communities while preparing the primary school child to grow into responsible adulthood by acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours conducive to healthy living. In this regard SHEP is viewed as a complement of BEND which is to ensure that all subjects in the Basic Education curriculum are to be adapted to the needs of the local communities. This experience is a clear attempt to improve the social impact of investments already made in primary education by manipulating available resources in a more rational, creative and socially relevant manner. The objectives of SHEP are:

- to institutionalize health education in the primary and secondary schools.
- to develop the capacity of children to relate basic science and health concepts to their everyday life experiences so as to enable them to develop attitude and behaviourial patterns conducive to improving the quality of their lives as well as that of their families.
- to involve teachers responsible for science and health education in the schools as agents of change in the promotion of preventive health knowledge in the community.
- to organize national emergency AIDS awareness programmes for upper primary and secondary school students. SHEP has been launched as a new syllabus which is examinable.

The programme has been developed and supervised by an Inter-Ministerial Advisory Panel involving Ministries of Health, Education, Planning and Economic Development, Local Government, Agriculture as well as the National Curriculum Development Centre, Aids Control Programme, Uganda National Examinations Board, Makerere University, UNICEF, WHO, Uganda Red Cross, AMREF, and Child-to-Child Programme. The Inter-Ministerial Advisory Panel has three sub-committees: Planning, Monitoring/Evaluation and Publicity.

SHEP can be proud of its accomplishments, particularly with regard to the introduction of health education into primary schools, the production of the Basic Primary Science and Health Teachers' Guide, Volume 2 for Primary 5, 6 and 7 and the accompanying Pupils' books and Health Education Syllabus for Primary Schools, the design and production of 30,000 copies each of four different Health Education kits (immunisation, water and sanitation, control of diarrhoel diseases, and AIDS control), the training for 6,000 primary school science teachers in 2,000 of the 8,023 government schools and the training of 1,000 secondary teachers in AIDS awareness.

The implementation of the School Health Education Project on a national scale using existing infrastructure to make education more relevant and cost effective, has reached and benefitted the following target groups, 2.6 million primary school pupils and 800,000 secondary school students and their families. Health Education messages have been transmitted to the pupils and from the pupils to the community.

Uganda

Complementary reading materials; the establishment of adult education centres; the monitoring of Compulsory Attendance programmes in eight of the country's parishes; and provision of skills training to students from level 3 may well take the programme to achieving its goal of eliminating illiteracy by the end of the century. Box 33 provides details of Jamaica's programme for urban children: LEAP - Learning for Activity Programme.

India's Project CAPE (Comprehensive Access to Primary Education) was launched in 1979-80. The major focus of Project CAPE has been learners from the disadvantaged populations, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, backward classes and girls. Among these learners are those elementary school age children who have never had the opportunity of attending any school and those who have dropped out at the early stage of elementary education. The educational programmes developed under project CAPE are characterised by flexibility in time and duration of learning, flexibility in curriculum, flexibility in methodologies of instruction and in evaluation. They are designed so as to enable learners to progress at their own pace on a part-time basis.

St Vincent and the Grenadines is currently re-organising its adult and continuing education provision (Youth, Sports and Women's Affairs portfolios being incorporated into the Ministry of Education) and looks to increased training of 'qualified cadres to execute the programs so envisaged'.

Trinidad & Tobago desiring to utilise existing resources more fully is phasing out adult education centres and turning to senior comprehensive schools to provide an evening service for those displaced by this change. An Adolescent Development Programme for the 16 to 19 age group exists too. Literacy, numeracy, self-esteem, and orientation to the world of work characterise its curriculum (see Box 34).

Barbados, in response to Government policy, has launched a pilot project of Continuing Education using the facilities of four secondary schools for evening classes. The programme offers 'further opportunities for persons to gain qualifications, both academic and technical, not previously acquired during formal schooling'. Catering for both school-leavers and drop-outs from the formal system, the programme also offers people within the community opportunities to 'improve their homemaking and craft skills and/or pursue careers of their choice or enter the job market'.

Several Commonwealth countries - Barbados, Kiribati, Malta, The Gambia, for example - accord recognition of NGOs such as churches, trade unions, family planning organisations etc. - in the drive to reduce illiteracy.

33 **Out-of-School Education: Learning for Earning Activity Programme (LEAP)**

Since 1982 LEAP has been established in the grades 7-9 of three urban All-Age schools with assistance from the Organisation of American States. This programme has allowed 50 marginal urban students in each of the three schools to participate in income-generating activities while at school, so as to help to improve attendance in school. The programme has had a positive effect on students attendance and achievement scores.

The presence of street children has long been recognised as a problem. In 1988, a LEAP Centre was established in Kingston with the assistance of UNDP to provide for children of the 12-17 age range, who lived on the street. These "Street Children" are recruited through referrals from schools, principals, and parents or many 'walk in' to the Centre. The enrolment in May 1990 was 128.

On admission they are assessed academically and psychologically and placed in classes based on their level of performance. In class, they participate in academic, vocational, and sports activities. They also receive guidance counselling. After three months they are again tested and may be directed to one of the following areas: mainstream schooling, the Human Employment and Resource Training (HEART) Trust, or the apprenticeship programme. They are regarded as being ready for on-the-job training when they can do simple measurements and return to the Centre after two or three months for sessions in behaviour modification. The Occupational Counsellor, attached to the Centre, monitors the children when they leave the Centre and encourages them to save. There is a Rehabilitation Officer who places those involved in the apprenticeship programme.

There are approximately 20 boys who are residential in the Centre. These are supervised by a matron and are provided with three meals daily while day students are given one meal per day. The Centre is equipped with hand tools and equipment for home economics, art and craft, and shoemaking.

Jamaica

(d) Innovative programmes which attempt to train women in non-traditional work skills require special attention as do specific strategies to target education and training programmes to women and girls.

Grenada recognises the role of women and reports modest success in its programmes designed to meet the various responsibilities of women, to encourage girls and women to take up skills courses once the preserve of men and to become more self-sufficient generally. The auto-mechanics training for women and on-the-job skills training for women (plumbing, electrical wiring) courses indicate ways forward (see Box 35).

Nigeria, referring to the World Decade of Women (1975-85) and noting 1990 as International Literacy year, gives particular regard to the education of women in its paper detailing a number of interesting initiatives that include:-

- discouraging the withdrawal of girls from school
- provision of training in income - generating activities and scholarship schemes for Nigerian girls who excel in Science, Technology and Mathematics
- increased training opportunities for girls and women
- the creation of women education branches in the Federal and State Ministries of Education
- Curricular activities in Women Education Centres, particularly in 'functional educational and literacy skills'
- translation of instructional materials and curricular guidelines into local languages
- the supply of sewing machines, cookers etc to 88 Women Education Centres throughout the Federation each of which will cater for a minimum of 4,000 women per annum
- the establishment of Federal Government Girls Colleges in each stage and
- a number of policies, some with legal backing, to discourage the withdrawal of girls from school.

(e) The establishment of better communication and practical working links between school and communities emerge as an important theme of the papers. A number of countries indicate ways forward on this front.

Swaziland schools have established school committees through which educationists and local community leaders meet regularly to discuss the work of schools and ways - through finance and labour - the community might benefit the school.

Mauritius points to the problem of activating parent-teacher associations, school committees etc. To encourage increased participation in PTAs, a scheme of

34 Adult Education

At present there are 32 adult education centres with an enrolment of 8,533 students. The centres are managed by a staff of 32 supervisors and 240 tutors. The programme which is very diversified includes:

1 Adult Basic Education - literacy courses leading to the following examinations:

    a Primary School Leaving Certificate;
    b London General Certificate of Education;
    c Caribbean Examination Council.

2 Technical/Vocational courses - Garment Construction, Plumbing, Typewriting, Architectural Drawing, etc.

3 Leisure-Time Activities - Dance, Drama, Music.

4 Family Life Education - Drug Abuse, etc.

5 Citizenship Education.

In this programme there is a direct relationship between what is offered and the 'felt needs' of the adult.

Trinidad & Tobago

35 Special Programmes for Women and Girls

Generally, out-of-school education does not place barriers between the sexes; but traditionally and culturally the male students pursue the technical fields. In recent times, more and more women are participating in skills courses that were traditionally associated with males. Programmes are specially designed to meet the various responsibilities of women and to encourage self-sufficiency. Some successes in this area are the Auto-Mechanics training for women and On-the-Job Training for women in Plumbing, Electrical Wiring and Technical Drawing, to name a few.

Women are also encouraged in Farm Management and pursue the full-time live-in programme as vigourously as men.

The opportunities available now to out-of-school youths and adults are to some extent complementary to the formal in-school learning. These opportunities offer 'second chances', provide experiences for real life situations and broaden the scope for educational advancement.

Grenada

matching grants has been introduced, Government funding an equivalent amount to that raised by the PTA itself.

In India the elementary school is becoming a centre for imparting education and spreading knowledge among all sections of the community to meet the educational needs of all age groups.

New Zealand has embarked on the establishment of Community Forums on education which aim to make education more responsive to community needs (Box 36).

(f) In many countries (Barbados, India, Kiribiti, Lesotho for example) there is recognition of the important role of Non-Governmental Organizations in formal and non-formal education activities. India is placing emphasis on decentralization and flexibility in planning and implementation of education programmes by encouraging and involving Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), voluntary and religious institutions in educational development. There are many examples where the community or the local organizations have started schools through voluntary action with their own resources. The government was then approached for recognition and support. This effort has been given added muscle with the government's policy of "Giving pre-eminence to people's involvement including association of non-governmental agencies and voluntary effort".

Commonwealth papers reveal a high priority placed by Governments on the continuing education of citizens, many of whom were denied any formal schooling first time round, and a keenness for the community to become more involved in the life of the school. It is to be hoped that the question of community financing will not cast a shadow over these priorities and that the twin goals of more relevant formal schooling and more available education out of school will become a reality by the year 2000.

6 FINANCE AND RESOURCES

Economic realities discussed earlier have faced education policy makers with a dilemma: the 'progress' of the decades of the 1960s and 1970s in increasing the provision of school places, achieved at a time of optimism - Rostow's 'stages' of economic development, talk of 'take off' and modernisation theories - is now fuel to a problematic international context in which the language is one of falling commodity prices, high interest rates, fluctuating oil prices, the debt crisis, with a result that the net flow of resources is now from the developing world to the industrialised world. Add to this the fact that nations heavily involved in the economic recession are the very nations with high percentages of their populations under the age of five (e.g. Kenya, Lesotho) and we have a situation where new solutions need to be found for very intractable problems.

A possible 'solution' is to shift the burden of financing education from the exchequer (i.e to the tax payer) to the community and parent. In spite of the problems of school-leaver

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36 Community Forums on Education

Provision has been made for Community Forums on Education to offer an opportunity for communities to discuss issues of educational importance to the local community. Community Forums may be set up by the Ministry at the initiative of a community or the Minister. Each forum will have a convenor appointed by the Minister, will be concerned with a single issue and have a limited life determined by the nature of that issue. All costs incurred in convening and running Community Forums will be met by the Ministry of Education. The forums should assist in making education more responsive to the community and provide opportunities for better communication and negotiation at the local level. Typical issues of local interest could be such things as zoning, school closure, or changes to the structure of schools.

New Zealand

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37 Increasing Resources: A School-Community Partnership

Harambee (pulling together of resources) efforts by the school community continue to be the 'force vitae' behind construction of the classrooms, Home Science rooms, laboratories and workshops. The Board of Governors, school committees and the Parents and Teachers Associations play a major part in effecting the Government's policy on "Partnership in Education Strategy". Through the Harambee philosophy, 37% of laboratories, 42% of workshops and 23% of Home Science rooms in Secondary Schools have been completed. In primary schools, 24% of workshops and 17% of Home Science Rooms have been built to ensure the success of the new 8-4-4 system. Improvisation is taking place where facilities are not yet built.

Kenya

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unemployment and the poor quality of education provided in many schools, parents still view schooling as a worthwhile economic investment. Such economic expectations are reinforced by social pressures which accord status and stigma to education and illiteracy respectively.

(a) Though politicians and educationists understand and share the individual hopes and aspirations of parents, they are far less convinced of the general economic investment potential of schooling. No longer are schools viewed as reliable 'engines' of economic development. Community financing is therefore seen by some governments as a way out of the dilemma of raising quality at a time of economic austerity. Zambia, Kenya and Britain are three countries that have all moved more or less in this direction.

> Zambia has reintroduced fees on a 'very limited scale'. With 96.5% of government expenditure going to support teachers' salaries, community and parents are looked to for the financing of learning materials, and in some cases capital expenditure on the maintenance and supply of school buildings.
>
> Kenya has in its harambee movement institutionalised and legalised the financial support to be given by parents and community leaders (Box 37). In 1985 12,493 primary schools were supported by community provision of basic facilities (Government being responsible for inspection, curriculum and the provision and payment of teachers).
>
> In Britain the law was recently amended, to make clear that while pupils would not be charged for materials, or trips and visits in school time, parents can be asked for voluntary contributions towards the cost of particular activities. Limits have also been increased for charitable donations to schools qualifying for tax relief.

Recent research (Lillis 1987*) on the issue highlights the dangers in contrasts between the 'quality' of some schools funded by government and the more 'inferior' community schools left to rely on community support (in Kenya less that 23% of 2,706 secondary schools are wholly government maintained, 21.40% assisted and 49.5% harambee). The impact upon the quality of primary education is difficult to assess but signals from the secondary area indicate that whereas community financing has the beneficial effect of opening up access to schooling to those rural and poor areas, the disparities in quality of provision of education (teachers, resources, buildings etc.) make for the creation of a two-tier education system. Such a product may well run counter to basic principles of equity and unity.

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* Lillis K (1987) 'Community financing of education: issues from Kenya' in Journal of Education Policy Vol 2 No 2

(b) Once again we return to the idea of balance. If the financial burden upon the community becomes too great to bear, one might have a situation where community involvement in other areas: curriculum, management and planning, for example, lessens. While community financing goes to the heart of the difficult relationship of school to community and community to government, the maintenance and development of universal, free primary education is also strongly supported.

Seychelles policy reiterates the provision of free tuition, free mid-day meals, learning aids, travel and subsidised school uniforms..

Barbados indicates that public education between the ages of 5 and 15 is both free and compulsory (though private schools are included in the 5-11 age group).

Trinidad & Tobago is trying to maintain free education without recourse to the introduction of fees. Policies include:-

- pupil-teacher ratios adjusted upwards
- redeployment of teachers with 'light' loads to problem subject areas
- increase in enrolments by primary schools 20% beyond their design capacity
- fund raising by community and NGOs, IDB loan, OAS grant, UNESCO and CARNEID sponsorship for professional training.

The question of shifting resources from other areas of government expenditure e.g. defence and within the education sector from tertiary to primary is given little attention by policymakers in the country papers reviewed. A willingness to restructure away from the military (current expenditure in excess of all spent on education); an opening up by the richer industrialised North of ways out of the debt trap; and an increase in and diversion of international aid to support basic education in the poorest developing countries are three policy options, discussion of which will no doubt continue in the years to come.

(c) Ways forward in terms of resource and finance strategies consist of diverting more funds from within budgets towards the basic education sector; the better, more efficient use of existing capacity; a move towards some reliance upon community financing; and a continued reliance upon support from the international community. The following measures indicated by country papers illustrate the prudent and often ingenious use of scarce resources. They also reflect priorities and give some indication of future trouble spots.

(i) A redistribution of resources within the education budget in favour of basic education

With 77.4% of the education budget devoted to salaries, Montserrat, like other Commonwealth countries, is faced with a choice of reduced staffing or looking to an alternative solution 'of expanding the revenue base'. They note that there is also an imbalance in the per capita allocation for the various education sections with primary receiving EC $35.83 (£7.90); secondary 1EC $293.86 (£64.73) and tertiary EC $965.51 (£212.67). A redistribution of these resources is one way forward.

India increasingly recognizes the need to redeploy resources within the education sector so as to allocate more financial resources to the elementary education sector. The country's Approach Paper on the Eighth five-year Plan highlights 'the need to give greater priority to mass literacy and elementary and secondary education as against the tendency to divert resources to ever higher levels of education'. The Paper recognizes the need to bring about a more balanced distribution of educational resources expecting that 'the stress will shift to the lower tiers of the educational pyramid'.

(ii) A sharing of responsibility between Government and community for the financing and resourcing of basic education

Malaysia notes an increasing trend to involve community in some funding, notably through parent-teacher groups, and aimed at assisting in the maintenance of school buildings, the purchasing of equipment, etc. Cyprus calls upon communities to shoulder the burden of capital investment (through a school tax in rural areas and a tax on real estate in the urban areas) with government paying teachers' salaries and giving annual grants to all local authorities according to the number of pupils C£8 (UK £9.67) per pupil for rural school and C£4 (UK £4.84) per pupil in urban areas. In the case of poor rural communities the State may go further and subsidise the cost of school buildings up to 50% of the total cost and in special cases up to 90%.

(iii)An increase in budgetary allowance from GNP towards education generally

Zambia, for example, relying on community support in terms of provision of materials, has raised the budgetary allocation to education from 3% of the GNP to 6%. 'This will help refurbish dilapidated school buildings and upgrade those which at the moment offer four years of basic education to at least seven years'.

(iv) A change in taxation to encourage private support of basic education

Britain provides an example of how changing limits on charities donations qualifying for tax relief will enable the country to raise additional revenue.

(v) An internal reorganisation of educational provision making better use of existing capacity

An audit of current capacity may well reveal ways in which teachers and policy-makers can establish more financial room for manoeuvre. More flexible ways for example in the use of classrooms (e.g. double-shifts); in the varied means in the training of teachers (e.g. reducing duration of pre-service training supported by intensive short courses in-service); and in the generation of income by the more productive use of school buildings and land (e.g. community and commercial use out-of-school hours) are just three examples of where judicious internal reorganisation can create more opportunity for financial support.
Reforms in teacher training: - one year teacher training programmes in Malawi; a more flexible use of resources e.g. mass education by means of radio in Swaziland; reforms in teacher conditions of service (thereby cutting down costs in teacher turn-over); and the merging of small schools within the same catchment area are illustrations of internal reform packages that in the long term provide a realistic, cost-effective way forward.

(vi) A targeting of aid to support the basic education sector

The use of directed overseas aid to specific basic education programmes is facilitating long term qualitative improvement and a spirit of self-reliance. Country case papers reveal a number of projects found to be worthwhile:

Barbados: the use of CIDA and other Commonwealth agencies providing scholarships for training in areas crucial to development.

Kiribati: the use of volunteer teachers: Peace Corps, VSO, etc in the formal and non-formal sectors

Lesotho's Basic and Non-Formal Education Systems (BANFES) project (1985 - 1991) is a co-operative venture between the Government of Lesotho through the Ministry of Education and the United States through the US Agency for International Development (USAID). It is targeted to four areas to promote efficiency and relevance: curriculum, methods and instructional materials; teachers' skills; establishing links between education and communities to support basic education and practical skills; and strengthening the infrastructure of the Ministry of Education.

The Gambia: an IDA Education project improving physical facilities e.g. 600 new classrooms; improved teacher education; better technical/vocational education facilities e.g. building of 'skill centre'

Trinidad & Tobago: an IDA loan which will construct 27 primary schools, train 4,800 teachers, provide library and textbooks, and support training to Masters and certificate level.

7 AREAS REQUIRING FURTHER ATTENTION

Though these six areas of policy and ways forward provide a good overview of the broad sweep of issues central to improvement in the quality of basic education, a reading of the country papers as a whole also indicates areas of possible importance accorded less attention by Commonwealth ministries.
Four areas in particular can be identified:-

(a) Research and evaluation. Though some countries have indicated research priority areas (Guyana, Seychelles) such as teacher turnover, the teaching of basic skills, the more effective employment of examination results for evaluative purposes, there appears - in the papers at least - limited evidence of priority in this area.

The work of Guyana's National Centre for Educational Resource Development (which has recently secured a UNESCO - CARNEID award to carry out research into strategies for improving the quality of output of primary schools) is one good example of the sort of activity Ministries of Education (possibly in collaboration with university departments and international agencies) might encourage. This could provide decision-makers with the necessary quantitative and qualitative data for informed analysis of policies and strategies for implementation and evaluation.

(b) Cultural issues. Though a number of country papers (Ghana, Mauritius, New Zealand) pay some attention to the importance of cultural traditions and the particular needs of those living within a multi-ethnic community, overall there seems a case to be made for policies and ways forward to take more account of the different perceptions, needs and life styles of the variety of peoples living within national boundaries. These include the educational needs of those recently settled in the country; the issue of language (or languages) of instruction; and the extension of formal and non-formal basic educational development that relate directly to cultural issues.

(c) Methodology. Surprisingly country papers pay less attention to teaching-learning methodology than one might have expected which may well relate to the earlier mentioned question of paucity of research data in this area.

Strategies teachers use to transmit knowledge, develop skills and inculcate required attitudes arguably are fundamental to any push to raise the quality of basic education. More classroom-based research, preferably by teachers and supported by evaluation units and university departments, can provide policy-makers with a rich store of data from which to devise improvements in this key area.

(d) School-Child Focus. Country papers produced by Ministries of Education understandably tend to view education development from the perspective of policies and initiatives devised and carried out by Government. It is easy therefore for perspectives of the child and the school at individual and local level to be overlooked and for attention to be given to the system and its constituent parts, and from the view of those centrally concerned with its direction.

38 **International Co-operation**

Educational linkages have been established with countries like Britain, the U.S., Japan, Germany, France, Australia etc. to name a few and visitorships, exchange of teachers, and teaching materials have been effected. Officers of the Ministry of Education have taken part in International Conferences discussing educational issues at either the Commonwealth Minsters of Education Conferences, the UNESCO General Conferences, the International Bureau of Education Conferences, Specialist Regional Conferences like CASTME, Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Educational Administrators, and others.

Fortunately too, Kenya is involved in a number of educational activities taking place on an international scale. Some of these activities take place in Kenya. The African Bureau of Educational Research has a regional centre at Kenyatta University. The African Social and Environmental Programme has its headquarters at the Kenya Institute of Education. UNESCO's ROSTA regional offices are situated in Nairobi and HABITAT has its headquarters in Kenya. The UNDP, NORAD, DANIDA, CIDA, SIDA and the British Council all have offices in Kenya and partake in programmes related to education development among others.

Other International Organisations which contribute substantially to development of education in Kenya are The Basic Education Research Centre stationed at Kenyatta University, and the Network for Education Innovation and Development in Africa (NEIDA) which focuses on exchange of information on education matters. NEIDA members have joined with other 14 African Countries in another programme of Information Training and Education Material (IFOMA) which is funded by the Spanish Government and has its main duty as holding workshops to discuss production of educational materials.

The Basic Education Research Centre carries out research on basic education and disseminates the results to its 15 member countries. The centre also acts as a repository of relevant materials on basic education.

Kenya

III INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

Commonwealth countries were asked to provide indications of where assistance from abroad has proved or could prove useful in improving quality of basic education (Box 38). Assistance and co-operation can be viewed in terms of that received and that required.

Assistance Received

Three broad areas of support can be identified. Examples from country papers are given to illustrate the nature of such assistance.

(a) Assistance in the improvement of basic infrastructure of schools

Trinidad & Tobago indicate that loans (an IDB and OAS grant specifically) have assisted with infrastructural improvement of schools and provision of learning materials (interestingly too 'the development of forty pre-school model lessons').

Nearby, Grenada's Basic Needs Trust Fund, financed by USAID and operated by the Caribbean Development Bank has repaired and refurbished eleven schools, assisted by the British Development Division in terms of furniture and equipment.

The Government of Sri Lanka has signed an agreement with the World Bank to obtain loan assistance amounting to US $49 million for the development of general education. The greater part of the loan (US $30.5 million) will be used over a period of five years (1990-94) for the improvement of infrastructural facilities of primary and junior secondary schools in the rural areas.

(b) Assistance by means of scholarships, with training of education personnel, particularly in areas of management and supervision

Barbados, echoing other Caribbean states, acknowledges assistance from the OAS and UNESCO; and CIDA and Commonwealth agencies for assisting with scholarships in fields of training 'crucial to the development of the country'.

Malawi pledges itself to 'continue to participate in co-operative arrangements to exploit economies of scale and multinational concern in areas of basic education, research and specialised training in many other areas'.

Malta has received quite a number of scholarships awarded under various agreements. 'These scholarships have been the life-blood of education in Malta, frequently generating innovative ideas and spearheading or supporting necessary changes in education'.

Cyprus acknowledges bilateral agreements with other countries in the fields of education, culture and sports. There are now 19 such agreements with other countries with programmes of two and three year duration which are renewed regularly. These

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39 Additional International Assistance Required

Solomon Islands already receives considerable assistance from countries and donor agencies, but it is only in recent years that it has been receiving assistance specifically in education. While the following might appear to be a formidable amount of assistance required, it should be seen as building on a relatively new and small base of current international assistance.

Assistance is required in these key areas:

- Increased ouput of teachers for pre-school, primary school, and community education.
- Program to replace the untrained teachers in primary schools (50 percent of the total) with trained teachers.
- Expand building program for the above sectors of education.
- Expand the production and supply of books, equipment and furniture in the above sectors of education.
- Introduction and maintenance of an Educational Broadcasting Service.

Solomon Islands

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agreements usually include the exchange of publications and educational materials, visits of education officials and research scientists and provision of scholarships for studies or training of Cypriot educators.

(c) Assistance with the provision of learning material and equipment

Jamaica receives assistance from the World Food Programme and USAID in the provision of snacks for children. Twenty cents is charged per child to help provide such things as a school refrigerator and improved sanitation.

Ghana, noting the role international organisations have played in the development of the country's education system, specifically indicates assistance provided by UNICEF in the form of supply of tools, toys and equipment for its nursery schools; German and Swedish support for its education for handicapped children's programme; and UNESCO coupons providing 'tremendous assistance' in the shape of books, equipment and training and like Kiribati, volunteer organisations for assistance in supplying teachers for the formal school sector.

India has received assistance from UNICEF since 1967 in the reorganisation and expansion of the teaching of science in primary and upper primary schools. The programme involved science curriculum renewals, development of instructional materials, upgrading of elementary teacher training institutions, training of inservice teachers and use of environment and local resources for teaching of science.

In receiving assistance from overseas one Commonwealth country sounds a note of caution:- Malaysia, while welcoming assistance from the World Bank for instance picks up on the questions of debt. 'While some basic sources of funding have been able to meet some basic needs, external financing has also brought in its train, certain problems. For example a large percentage of the national budget allocated for "committed" expenditure is channelled towards the servicing of loans and interest. Expenditure in this area shows an increasing trend and is envisaged to continue in the near future'.

Assistance Required

Many Commonwealth countries (Nigeria, Sri Lanka) indicate that the vast majority of public funds allocated to educational expenditure are swallowed up by the payment of salaries (in Sri Lanka's case 82% of total recurrent expenditure goes on wages) and the maintenance of existing infrastructure. Little remains to be spent on such important things as curriculum development or in-service teacher education (though all these are recognised as crucial by Commonwealth governments). As a result governments look to external assistance to support improvements in these and other areas which often take the form of bi-lateral development projects (Box 39).

The Seychelles seek assistance in four areas: teachers for secondary schools, until such time as local teachers are able to qualify and replace them; assistance from abroad for training teachers for secondary education, as the country does not have its own tertiary education; assistance in the form of expertise in the areas of educational measurement for improving the techniques of assessment in both the primary and lower secondary sectors of basic education; and assistance for the development of the basic infra-structure, for the use of the mass media, for out-of-school science and technology education, for the improvement of basic education of both young people and adults.

Dominica is looking for assistance from the Organisation of American states, CARNEID, and the Organisation for Co-operation in Overseas Development. Resources will support innovations in teacher education which includes a pilot project to improve the academic qualifications of teachers.

Guyana identifies 'teacher quality' as an area in which substantial support from international and bilateral agencies is required; in particular the reorganisation of training at the Cyril Potter College of Education and the introduction of a special programme for teachers in the hinterland regions.

Sri Lanka no doubt speaks for all when she notes 'a developing country urgently needs foreign assistance in the form of grants. Foreign loans (and it is noted that the Government of Sri Lanka has just signed an agreement with the World Bank for loan assistance amounting to US$49 million for the development of general education) which add to the debt burden may be counter productive in the long run, though such assistance provides some measure of immediate relief to the recipient country'. Sri Lanka has to set apart as much as 24 per cent of her foreign exchange earnings to servicing the existing debt. In such a situation, the case for increasing grant assistance is strong indeed.

IV CONCLUSIONS

Given the rich variety of material to be found in the country case papers, some broad themes may be identified with caution. Most country papers give a clear indication of policies, often in the form of national education plans, which are properly seen as the 'engine' in the drive for improved quality of basic education.

First, in terms of policy, Commonwealth governments indicate a continued commitment to increased access of schooling, and a focus now on such issues as extension of provision to women, illiterates, and those who for whatever reason drop out or are pushed out of the formal system. Improved quality is not therefore to be achieved at the expense of quantity. This creates, of course, a tension in presenting and holding on to what has been achieved over the past two decades while at the same time trying to innovate and learn from past mistakes.

Strategies to achieve the noble aims set out at the beginning of the country papers necessarily involve prioritisation of policies and use of existing capacity. Some countries, like Pakistan for example, stress that whereas 'ideally speaking' all facets of the education system need improving if overall quality is to be achieved, the first priority of government is 'the provision of minimum basic facilities for each and every child of the nation'. Maintaining this balance between quantity and quality leads to a call (made eloquently in the Gambian paper for example) for 'the more efficient use of existing resources'. Such a move need not necessarily mean a cut in resources. Double shifts, more flexible in-service training of teachers, encouragement of local publishing of school texts, the amalgamation of small schools are all examples of imaginative and better use of existing capacity.

Priorities within the education system are identified by some countries: Trinidad and Tobago listing 17 strategies from 'a rationalisation of the list of textbooks in use at primary schools' to revision of timetables, syllabuses and examinations at that level, strategies which have had considerable impact on some of the challenges identified in their country paper. The Seychelles focus upon a two-pronged approach which will improve inputs into primary and lower secondary sectors of education and improve the welfare system to facilitate equal access to education at those levels.

Efficiency for countries such as Guyana means priority first being given to an improvement in the performance of the Central Ministry itself. Reorganisation, improved training of personnel, better information and retrieval systems are amongst measures viewed as crucial in the management and implementation of policies concerned with quality. Efficiency at the centre will also be achieved by improved collaboration among ministerial departments. The Government of Grenada is to re-establish its Education Advisory Council and build up links between departments responsible for teacher education, curriculum development and school supervision. Namibia's education department fragmented into eleven departments and 'organised along racial and ethnic lines' will restructure and rationalise its services on the principle 'of a unified central administration and decentralisation of services'.

The community as a resource generally (and that means not only in the financing of schooling) characterises many of the policies, strategies, and most promising ways forward of Commonwealth governments. Whether it is in the area of curriculum content or developments in teacher education, programmes look much more now to the realities of life within and without the classroom, the link between school and community increasingly becoming the focus for attention. Bermuda for example points out that its planning process, not only encouraged community participation in, and support for, developments in education but also strengthened the public accountability of the government with respect to education.on. Emphasis in Tanzania is on 'problem-solving strategy in implementing educational reforms', with the focus for change being laid at the feet of students and community who are seen as having, 'most if not all the ideas, resources and energy to bring about change'. The social interaction model is being employed to convince people of the 'value and usefulness of such innovations as the work-orientated curriculum'. The contribution of parents, pupils and non-governmental organisations in influencing the direction of change is seen as complementary to more efficiency at the centre.

In terms of the six areas identified as central to improvements in the quality of basic education what is noticeable, generally, is a move away from strategies to enhance academic development and towards action to support the 'holistic development of the individual' (eg Malaysia). Priority is being given to policies enhancing a more equitable distribution of educational opportunities, and in the case of reforms in assessment (ie less summative and more continuous modes of testing) a fairer and more realistic view of the learning process. Throughout the discussion of policies and ways forward in the six areas we have seen, as a cornerstone of quality, efforts to increase the relevance, efficiency and balance in the provision of educational services.

To improve the quality of something as important as education requires a delicate balance, it seems, between improving the quality of both ends and means of achieving change, between those at the centre of affairs and the needs and wishes of recipients living in towns and villages throughout the country, between a number of objectives, some quantitative, other more qualitative; and between a wish to preserve what is best from the past and to act in the service of the future.

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB - Asian Development Bank

CAI - Computer Aided Instruction

CARNEID - Caribbean Network for Educational Innovation and Development

CIDA - Canadian International Development Agency

CXC - Caribbean Examinations Council

DTTA - Distance Teacher Training Approach (Tanzania)

GNP - Gross National Product

IDA - International Development Agency

IDB - International Development Bank

JAMAL - Jamaican Movement for the Advancement of Literacy

LEA Local Education Authority (Britain)

LMS - Local Management of Schools (Britain)

NGO - Non-Governmental Organisation

NIED - National Institute of Education Development (Namibia)

NPSC - New Primary School Curriculum (Malaysia)

NWFP - North West Frontier Province (Pakistan)

NYS - National Youth Service (The Seychelles)

OAS - Organisation of American States

PEDEP - Primary Education Development Project (Pakistan)

PSLC - Primary School Leaving Certificate (Malawi)

PTA - Parent Teachers Association

SAT's - Standard Assessment Tasks (Britain)

UNDP - United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organisation

UNICEF - United Nations Children Fund

USAID - United States Aid

VSO - Voluntary Service Overseas

ZINTEC - Zimbabwe Integrated National Education Course